University of Alberta

Resistance and Insurgency in the Age of Globalization and the Role of Education

by

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Canada

Dedication

To humanity which deserves a better world
To Central America the land where I was born
To Canada, my adoptive country

To the oppressed of all times.

To people worldwide, in appreciation for all that they have taught me about creative resistance and insurgency.

To teachers worldwide, for their implicit love in their teaching practice, and their role in generating possibilities of critical pedagogy.

Abstract

A journey to the past is not made only to release someone's anguish and pain, but to confirm that lived experiences have a context. The individual is then able to dream of a better world. Such dreams may be dashed periodically, but they may still be revived and raised again to a conscious level.

Contemporary capitalism, globalization, and imperialism form a triad that tends to oppress and exploit, violate sovereignty and the natural environment, and decimate humans without regard for race, religion, ethnicity, or gender. What can be done about this?

The first obstacle to overcome concerns the ideological messages and images of frustration they create. Conservative theorists of globalization as philosophers of disenchantment have been denying history and any alternative human futures. The media corporations have been systematically distorting information about the fuller conditions of the world.

Today, however, there are increasing anticapitalist, antiglobatizationist, and antimperialist resistances and insurgencies. Socialism still offers the perspective of a better world, and the past failures of socialist projects do not mean that socialism and Marxism are dead.

Unfortunately education has been and still is being exercised to domesticate citizens. Critical pedagogy, however promotes the idea that teaching is an act of love for others rather than of simply skill training and a contracting act. Teachers are conceived of as agents of change rather than

"facilitators" of skills and knowledge. Students are not "recipients," but real and potential citizens who deserve security, optimism, and guidance in finding the causes and effects of their situations along with the possibilities for changing them.

In the dissertation a "Call to Teachers" and a "Manifesto to Fight to Win" are addressed to people in general and confirm the insurgent nature of this topic. Dreams of social liberation make sense if these dreams are shared.

There is no conflict between academic aspirations and the will to contribute to the just cause of social liberation. This option of emancipation can be formulated through reflections, poetry, letters, and more. In this regard, progressive research at universities is relevant to the situation that humanity is facing, especially in those countries currently threatened by the current U.S administration.

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To my beloved family:

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My children Julius, Liliana, Kryssia, Yuri, Juliamaria, Rocío, Stefan y Carlos for giving meaning to my dreams.

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My brother Adolfo because much of my understanding of my childhood I owe to him.

My brother Luis who always understood my emancipation dreams.

My aunt who taught me to read and write.

To my long lasting friends:

Mario, Prudencio, Jesús, Rafael, José, Roberto, Julio, Manuel, Víctor y Miriam, Guillermo y Elizabeth, Juvenal y Sergio for sharing my dreams.

Foreword

1 How I came to this study

I decided to do this study because it seemed that the hope to build a better world had been destroyed by waves of frustration and disenchantment. Neoliberal globalization was engulfing economy, politics, ideology and culture. Particularly public education, teacher education and teachers were targeted by aggressive neoliberal policies. Hegemony and domination by the US administrations jumped to modalities of a new imperialism. Within that context, humanity was struggling to survive, and the voice of irreverence, resistance and insurgency were still having no impact.

Before that uncertainty I wondered if the ability to dream of changing that unequal and unfair world could be vindicated and if indeed there was a possibility to build a better world.

I reflected that a way to do my study would be to establish a relationship between my personal history and the social and political context. In other words this study was conceived by my anguish over what contribution I could make against the oppressive global system.

2 What I am attempting in the study

I am looking for the presence of dreams and hope through acts of resistance and insurgency. Since I have a personal relationship with this context, I also have a moral commitment not only to find acts of opposition, but to join them and to call others to join. This is the first attempt of this study.

The second attempt of this study is to find the role education is playing.

These subversive and insurgent intentions are based on the fact that my Self is conformed by academic aspirations, my conceptions of education, teaching and the teacher, my lived experiences within revolutionary matters, and even by my incipient poetic vein. My Self – like everyone's - is holistic.

3. Possibilities and limitations of the study

Being a teacher and a militant is advantageous when pursuing this study.
It has not been easy to formulate a theory that embraces this duality.

I was able to find worldwide acts of resistance and insurgency in various forms against not only neoliberal globalization, but also capitalism and imperialism.
I would have liked to include all of the information I found. I had difficulties summarizing the information that I finally included.

I found that there is not much evidence of education's contribution to the struggle against neoliberal globalization. Critical Pedagogy is one valuable route to readdressing education, teaching and teachers to overcoming domestication of citizens.
While my analysis of the present role of education is brief, the possibility of education playing an emancipator role in the social liberation process is stressed.

I have confirmed my choice of Marxism and Leninism as guides to transform the world. I have learned the deficiencies of the failed socialist projects and in interpreting and applying Marxism and Leninism.
I have had difficulties explaining my political and ideological position without it being interpreted as emotional discourse fueled by rhetoric.

I have found that there is an alternative to neoliberalism: Socialism.

I feared transmitting the image of myself as an orthodox communist or a mechanical follower of slogans. This fear is boosted by the fact that my preference is essentially political and ideological and therefore controversial.

I was able to identify that Che's emancipator claims and acts are full of pedagogy, useful not just for militants, but for parents, teachers and educators. Did I transmit a picture of the pedagogical possibilities of Che Guevara's theory and praxis?

I found commonalities and differences between Freire and Che Guevara.
I am not sure if my parallel of their lives gives a clear approach.

I have reestablished my confidence in the strength of people, my love for others and my optimism: The unipolar US imperialism is not eternal or infallible. A better world is possible but we must create it.
Was I able to display my values and principles as the bases of my political and ideological position, preferences and vision, or do I depict myself as a fundamentalist or fanatic?

I have gained awareness of the changes in contemporary capitalism and imperialism.
I had difficulties explaining, in a few pages, this political and social context.

I have confirmed the radical importance of theory and praxis and their dialectical interrelationship. The first is irrelevant charlatanry; the second is blind actions that go nowhere.
My limitations in English impede me in explaining some points related to theory, mainly those that are rooted in my specific political experience.

I gained awareness that my Self in isolation does not exist and does not make sense. My Self responds to Others or is a product of my interaction with a context or a situation which I live within or am related to.
Sometimes I fell short when formulating my reflections into an intellectual language that is not mine. I experience difficulties "borrowing" a language whose symbology is not related to my life experience and theoretical frame.

By nature I am very sincere and open when sharing my thoughts, emotions and sentiments. However, never before have I displayed "risky" facts of my and my family's history. In this writing these intimacies appeared spontaneously throughout the process of merging my personal history and the social and political context.
I am aware that this study might devise several reactions, political, educational and familial. I am sorry if, with no intention some memories cause discomfort.

Emancipation is a holistic conception in three levels. First, material emancipation: to satisfy basic living conditions (health, house, clothing, food), eradicate poverty and unemployment, improve environment conditions, regulate the cost of life, stop neoliberal measures, to low taxes. Second, political emancipation: forge popular democracy, political freedoms, eradicate all kind of oppressions: family violence, discrimination by gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion. And third, spiritual emancipation: the access to education, culture and entertainment for all.
Did I clearly transmit my emancipation ideal?

I am not claiming violence, but promoting the need to build a better world. The revolutionary is motivated by love. History shows that always the revolutionary began with pacific and measured means to impulse revolution. And history shows that there is not one case of victory without violence from those who lost power. Revolutionaries must try to decrease the human, material,

environmental and cultural costs of revolution. Revolutionaries are able to control or refrain from the use of violence, but they cannot control the violent actions and responses from the oppressors. My clamor is based on hope, and hope is fueled by love to others. Why as a revolutionary who loves people would I incite violence that would mean the death of these same people? Similarly, why would I hide the real violent nature of the conservative forces? Why I would deny people the right to learn how to defeat the violence used against them? Including the possibility of the violent actions and reactions of oppressors does not mean that I am proposing violence.

I fear that despite my best attempts interpretation of "violence" in my clamors will persist. I am open to improving my academic language if doing so helps to improve my message of hope to build a better world, never hiding, denying or diminishing reality. Did I transmit that the moral integrity of a revolutionary is not compatible with violence per se?

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CHAPTER ONE:

A JOURNEY

With much love to the women with a history of sadness which is beginning to come together.

Sadness in the Gender

"It is a pity that it is a girl. Women suffer a lot," said the grandma when her last great-great-granddaughter was born. With her sea of wrinkles and beauty marks, light and tears fuelled her little eyes.

The nephew of the señora wanted the girl and took her for himself. But Doña Teresa would not tolerate "concubines," which are not pleasing to God. "You are going to make the commitment!" she shouted at him and married her nephew José María to Justa, the daughter of the servant. That marriage was celebrated with all the requirements of the law and society: civil and religious ceremonies. Only love was missing.

At 13 years old, that girl very soon will give birth, amidst the lack of love and the hopelessness, which Doña Teresa could not cure. The girl was not prepared for the defloration; neither was she wanting a rich husband who was a 'drinker, fanatic partier and gambler.' She did not imagine the meaning of the nine long months of gestation, which felt like years to her!

She was not prepared for the pain of the delivery or to raise that very weak baby who at the end hung from the breast of one of the nursing goats that belonged to the generous aunt Candelaria.

Justa ran away, leaving the town, and on the river bend of Rio Lempa she tried to forget the memories of when she converted from a child to a woman and from a child to a mother.

In the meantime, the baby girl innocently sucked the breast of Tía Candelaria's goat. At her early age she was not able to know that she would continue the cycle of sadness, initiated by her mother, that would extend to the fifth generation of women, and maybe even further.

An Autobiographical Journey

Butt et al. (1988) consider that a teacher's past experiences influence "how teaching is experienced and reconstructed" (p. 14). Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (1995, p. 520) formulated four steps in the moment of *currere* within which I locate the autobiographical journey of this study:

1. **The regressive moment:** In reliving insurgent*2 memories to overcome individual and collective amnesia (chapters 1 to 5 of this thesis), I am considering that one's lived or existential experience is a data source.

I return to the past, trying to capture it as it was (Pinar, 1995, p. 520), or at least its essence. I am looking for pictures and texts in printed materials—magazines, and pamphlets—. . . and in doing so I am transporting myself. I am watching old videos of news reports and movies with the sounds and images of those heroic days! I am listening to old tapes with old voices that claim liberation.

2. **The progressive moment:** To possibilities of resistance*2 and education's contribution (chapter 6). "The future—like the past—inhabits the present" (p. 520).

In chapter 6 I am searching the present but wondering if there are people who, regaining dreams of liberation and willingness, resist and fight for those dreams. In chapters 9, and in the Appendix I am clearly looking toward the future, even conceiving a Manifesto. I am imagining "possible futures." (Pinar 1996) or, based on Marxism, having a vision.

3. **The analytic moment:** The examination of both past (chapters 1 to 5) and present (chapter 6) (Pinar, 1995, p. 520). "How is the future (chapters 9, and Appendix) present in the past, the past in the future, and the present in both?" (Pinar, 1995, p. 520).

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*1 Insurgent: In this study insurgent is an organized, systematic and purposed movement, addressed to eradicate the causes of exploitation and/or oppression, exercised by a government, a regime or a socio-economic system. The insurgent activist, militant or combatant does not only resist and react to survive within exploitation, but envisions and strengthens his/her actions to eradicate it. Insurgent dynamic includes actions of resistance.

*2 Resistance: In this study, resistance are reactions and actions addressed to survive in an oppressive situation. Resistance is a response meaning to endure. Resistance is not the same as insurgency, but sometimes a campaign of resistance might become insurgency. Also resistance campaigns might be part of an insurgent strategy.

I see the presence of future in the past: Only individual and collective confidence in the possibility of triumph (future) can explain the quota of sacrifice (in that past that at that moment was present). I see the past in the future: Those dreams of social liberation from the past (reliving in chapters 4 and 5) are an inspiration to continue building (imagining a better future). And I see the present in the past and in the future: How I think, feel, and act and react about the present phenomenon of capitalism, imperialism, and neoliberal globalization has to do with my past, full of dreams and militancy. In other words, how I experience the present is influenced by my past. Both my past and my present are interacting with each other (Eisner, 1985; as cited in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 515). I am trying to exercise "our capacity to turn around the past and alter the present in its light, or to alter the past in the light of the present" (Bruner, 1999), p, 109).

In addition, to study ourselves favours the study of curriculum (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; as cited in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 515). The past can provide inspiration, and the future can booster hope, but both inspiration and hope become possible only by the current presence of individuals and collectives who conceive inspiration and hope and indeed become "fighters against injustice" and "constructors of dreams."

4. **The synthetic moment:** "What is the meaning of the present?" (Pinar, 1995, p. 521; chapter 6). Reentering the present. Is the present definitive regarding which accounts make sense of the past and the future?

'To make sense' for me, is not an abstraction. It is a possibility for regaining the dreams from the past and to build hope in the future. Hence, the present is not just an unanimated bridge between the past and future, but it is also a turning point. The present is the 'blender' and 'processor' of experiences and dreams from the past and hope and confidence from the future. The present is the 'brain' for understanding and the 'heart' for generate passion before the past and the future. The present is the 'muscles' to endure pains and accumulate

courage, and the 'senses' to perceive the holistic influence from the past being able to smell, touch, taste, hear, and see. In sum, the present is the point not to reconcile the past and the future, but rather to relive the past and to conceive the future.

The future means the transition from globalism to new socialism, not simply a socialist 'utopia' that I have 'imagined' from my comfortable chair. The visualization of socialism as an alternative to globalization is composed by "past and present experiences and opportunities that merge from the failures and crises of the 'export strategies'" (Petras, 1999, p. 8). In other words, there are two fountains of learning to construct a new socialist alternative: from its capitalist adversary and from the virtues and mistakes of the past socialism (the revolutionary experiences).

Without this autobiographical interpretation of past, present, and future, it is useless to try to understand my notion of praxis before an unfair reality that needs to be not just interpreted, but also changed. Butt et al. (1988) state "How each of us experience our self can be considered, then, as perhaps a crucial primary context and reflection can be considered as a crucial primary educative process. We may call this the existential or intrapersonal context" (p. 24).

Departing From Premises

I have formulated three main premises that give contexts and links to this study:

1. Once upon a time collective and individual dreams of liberty, justice, and more were common. I support this premise in chapter four, "Picking Up Personal Insurgent Memories From My Native Country," and chapter five, "Picking Up Personal Insurgent Memories From My Adoptive Country."

2. Capitalism, Neoliberal globalization and imperialism are impacting the world. Multinational corporations operate in many countries with a great deal of mobility, evading taxes and enjoying deregulation. These multinational corporations have their headquarters in the imperial triad: the US, EU, and Japan.

The old nation-state governments still exist within the structure of power. Even though the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Asian Bank (AB), the World Trade Organizations (WTO), and others take important decisions in great geographical locations and force economic policies upon many countries, those who lead these institutions are linked to the imperial states and to the multinational corporations. In fact, their respective imperial government appoints the top managers of those institutions. The involved ministries of the imperial states establish the fundamental policies regarding loans and conditions. Hence, these financial institutions, rather than erode and displace the power of the imperial states, increase, expand, and deepen the power of said imperial states (Petras, 2001, p. 3). Neoliberal theorists of globalization since 1990s have been maintaning that the "information revolution" has erased state borders and created a new global economy, "that information technologies have revolutionized economies and thus created a new global economy in which nation states and national economies have become superfluous" (Petras, 2001, p. 3). Accordingly, "the new technological revolution has transformed capitalism by providing a new impetus to the development of the productive forces" (p. 3) sustain the theorists of globalization. In consequence, they add, the Old Economy (manufacturers, mining, agriculture and social services) no longer exists. Market is a god that devises "real democracy," which is the frame for people to "make choices about the future" and more: "The new efficiencies produced by the new technologies ensures high growth" (p. 4). What is noticeable is that the "New Economy" is not able to overcome the capitalist crisis; conversely, it "is more vulnerable and has less resources" (p. 4).

3. Education has never been neutral. "Curriculum reform is always a political-pedagogical process and, for us, substantively democratic" (Freire, 1993, p. 19).

The welfare state used to have its social net to alleviate some of the unmet needs of people. Thus, reformism was a resource of a class state to reduce pressure against the essence of exploitation. Education, on the other hand, has not been neutral. With neoliberal globalization the welfare state is dismantled and the state increases its services to corporations. Thus, governments openly promote the traditional, essential role of the school to support and reproduce the capitalist system.

Education must commit to siding with the causes of liberation instead of continuing to be one of the pillars that supports a system based on exploitation and oppression. The meaning of education has to do with our life, so education "must pass through an equally complete transformation" (Dewey, 2001, p. 20). The pretext of a "neutral" education is more ridiculous now than ever. Thus it is time to invert the coin. Why we do not readdress education towards the radical transformation of an unjust system "in which all of us can have the freedom and opportunity to create knowledge from our own experience" (Raynolds; as cited in Freire, 1993, p. 9).

The analysis of the "contemporary context" requires a principled analysis of the objective and subjective realities that "resists the temptation to magnify the current configuration of power and minimize the Left in a kind of self-flagellation to expiate the excessive exuberance of the past (a kind of mea culpa)" (Petras, 2001, p. 2).

In spite of their importance, these premises are not to be taken as the focus of this study.

Raising the Research Questions

1. "Looking for and empowering possibilities of resistance and insurgency" (against contemporary capitalism, globalization, and imperialism).

The triad of capitalism, imperialism, and neoliberal globalization tend to be seen as separate phenomena. It is fundamental to point out their mutual differences as well as their dialectical relationship. In current times, these three 'things' together or interrelated, are inflicting intensive and extensive exploitation, oppression, and repression. Hence, there are varied reactions and actions that need to be recounted and analysed in terms of their possibilities for winning. Therefore, because contemporary capitalism, imperialism, and neoliberal globalization are powerful but not omnipotent or invincible, the research question one involves "Looking for and empowering possibilities of resistance and insurgency" (against contemporary capitalism, globalization, and imperialism) (Chapter 6 and Appendix).

It is difficult to comprehend this research question outside of a revolutionary perspective that must be based on the analysis of the revolutionary experience that includes "uneven development of struggles in different continents, the contradictory tendencies, the achievements and limitations, the short and long term legacies, the relationship between economics and politics" (Petras, 2001, p. 1). During a period of counterrevolution, which may be followed by temporary or historical defeats of the revolutionary project, many revolutionary and progressive intellectuals will react in different defeatisms "before the power, realism and eloquence of the Right" (p. 1), on one hand discovering virtues of right-wing ideologies and building a doctrine of "invincibility and irreversibility of the dominant right," and on the other hand "denigrating the Left, its defeats, mistakes, failures, delusions, self-deceptions, etc." (p. 1). These intellectuals go further: They see "contemporary power as the

reality" and the "historical defeat of the Left as the starting point for new political thinking" (p. 1).

Hence, without historical depth, these intellectuals arrogantly allow themselves to theorize about the past, present, and future development of the Left. In other words, a critical reevaluation of the past and its relation to the Left today is needed to achieve a "systematic understanding of the ascendancy and contradictions of Euro-American imperialism, its limitations and the radical and revolutionary challenges confronting it, both externally and internally" (p. 1).

2. "Looking for and empowering the contribution of education to the resistance and insurgency" (against contemporary capitalism, globalization, and imperialism), through the contributions of Paulo Freire and Ernesto Che Guevara.

Considering education as curriculum, the teaching-learning process, and the role and position of teachers, its inherent conditions as part of the ideological superstructure and the institutional system, the second part of my research question involves "looking for and empowering the contribution of education to the resistances and insurgencies" (against contemporary capitalism, globalization, and imperialism) (chapter 9 and Appendix 1).

We must try to locate education within the economic and social system. The current system domesticates teachers and after a while blames them for the failings of the public school system. The system also demands efficiency, effectiveness, and competitiveness of the students who become the labour, technicians, and management to meet capitalism's needs. Accordingly, schools are conceived "as institutions for indoctrination, 'for imposing obedience, for blocking the possibility of independent thought, and they play an institutional role in a system of control and coercion,'" according to Noam Chomsky (as cited in Araujo Freire & Macedo, 1998, pp. 1-2). In this context it is no surprise that literacy, unable to "link the reading of the word and the world," produces

semiliterates who will be "able to read the text of his or her specialization, but are ignorant of all the other bodies of knowledge that constitute the world of knowledge" (p. 2).

Thus, the blame has to be put on the institutions that train teachers, abstracting "methodological issues from their ideological contexts," with the resul that teachers are not able to establish "the interrelationship between sociopolitical structures of a society and the act of learning and knowledge" (Araujo Freire & Macedo, 1998, p. 3).

Clearly, education is not neutral and should not claim neutrality in the struggle for liberation against capitalism and imperialism and the so-called 'globalization' (the neoliberal application that is both capitalist and imperialist). Thus, there are probably possibilities for education to play a role aside of the exploited, repressed, and oppressed.

What Is the Purpose of This Study?

Developing this topic has to do with theory, praxis, and moral commitment. This topic is triggered by a sort of "calling" that implies not only thinking and deliberating, but also acting. It is a matter of theory and praxis—the Marxist conception of dialectics, according to Luckás (as cited in Alonso, 1981, p. 103). For over four years I have been shaping this topic. I need to study the differences among contemporary capitalism, imperialism, and neoliberal globalization and their mutual relationship (chapter 6).

I will be able to learn how, specifically capitalism, imperialism, and neoliberal globalization are hurting people, the environment, and education in underdeveloped countries such as El Salvador, as well as in developed countries such as Canada. In fact, in both developed and underdeveloped countries there are many similarities in neoliberal globalization's measures and its effects. For instance, public patrimony is being been sold, the social network is being cut,

thousands of people have been left with no job, and so on. To identify the operation of capitalism, imperialism, and neoliberal globalization's and their impact on peoples' lives, environment and education in a developed country in turn reinforces the understanding that globalization hits not just the 'Third World.'

Then I will look for forms of resistance and insurgency against this triad (four part of chapter 6), and I will look for the contribution of education—as curriculum, teaching and learning, and teachers, through the contributions of Paulo Freire and Ernesto Che Guevara (chapter nine). Finally, I will advocate for resistance and insurgency against this juggernaut through a Manifesto (Appendix).

In chapter 10 I will formulate a summary and some conclusions. In reliving past memories, I not only revive my memory, but also stress the importance of the notion of autobiographical writing (chapters 1 to 5). I display the significance of autobiographical pieces as personal memories. This research also contributes to the debate on education and curriculum and addresses 'risky' aspects such as social class, curriculum and change, technology, the role of teaching and teachers, and teachers as dreamers and makers of dreams and dreamers (chapter 9 and Appendixes 1 and 2).

Closing

The contemporary capitalism, imperialism, and neoliberal globalization in which we are living have been conceived by defeatist theorists as omnipresent, omnipotent, and invincible. These conditions have been manipulated to engender pessimism and frustration among the majority of people who suffer exploitation, oppression, and repression.

Of a certainty, there is economical, ecological, political, ideological, and cultural damage inflicted by these three depredators that need not only to be

academically studied, but also to be stopped. Therefore, this study contributes to the denunciation and unmasking of capitalism, imperialism, and its latest application to exploit and oppress: neoliberal globalization.

In completing this research, among other things, I have been able to explain clearly what contemporary capitalism, imperialism, and neoliberal globalization are and what their world impact has been.

Finally, what ever the results, this dissertation will claim, "Yes, it is possible to vindicate the truth and the ability to dream and to build." Some will call it a "biased" conclusion; I call it "insurgent thinking."

Finally, throughout this study I have learned many things; I have improved my theoretical formation, which, merged with my practice, invigorates my praxis. Otherwise it would not make sense. I cannot just contemplate how reality is smashed; it is important not only to deliberate, but to interpret and change reality. Talk? Yes, but using a language that is intelligible to common people.

And . . .

How does the story at the beginning of this chapter connect to me? In fact, it does directly. The grandmother is my great-grandmother, the baby girl is my grandmother (January 18, 1908-January 27, 1992), and the baby girl in the initial comments is my daughter (born on November 25, 1986). They belong, respectively, to the first, second, and fifth generation of my history of sadness.

My mother (born on April 22, 1929), who is not mentioned in the story, is the daughter of that baby girl (my grandmother). My mother is the third generation of this history of sadness. Pregnant at the end of 1944, she became a mother when she was 15 years old. Again, there were a lot of possessions and no love. Instead, there was plenty of anger and the frustration of a child forced to be a woman, of a girl forced to become a mother.

I am her second child, born with no love around. . . . In a certain way my older brother and I were oppressed (children) by the oppressed (mother) by one of the oppressor "machos" in the unequal system of exploitation and oppression that framed our lives. So there is no surprise that my older brother did not fit into the style of life of society, and, in my own way, neither did I. Why would I want a sick system, a regimen, and a government that tolerates that oppression?

Therefore, if my mom is the third generation, in the fourth generation there are no women. We are three men whose lives show that sadness as an undesirable inheritance. The fifth generation is our children. Is that sadness recycling among them? Unfortunately, there are signs of oppression. . . . In fact, the story must be completed one day.

CHAPTER TWO:

A NOTION OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING

> When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning. (Baudrillard, 1983)

Introduction

This is qualitative research, in which the notion of autobiographical writing is employed. The study will be from my own point of view, which includes my background in El Salvador, the conditions of my departure, my life in Canada for the last 14 years, and the disintegration of spaces that I am witnessing.

Autobiography will be present through various sources—memories, dreams, reflections, letters, and so on. "Examining experience is the key to education," claimed Dewey (as cited in Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xiii). In doing this I confirm the meaning of these experiences and the context in which they occurred and examine the possibilities for experience to sustain education through their meaning and context.

John Dewey (as cited in Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) believed that autobiographical writing is "a way of understanding experience" (p. xxvi). Thus, "Resistance and Insurgency in the Age of Globalization" is made up of many experiences because "experience is the stories people live" (p. xxvi). I am convinced that there is an eternal and fresh stream of experiences because a person "lives stories, and in the telling of these stories, reaffirms them, modifies them, and creates new ones" (p. xxvi).

There is nostalgia in my project. Do I appeal to nostalgia as a refuge from the violence of the present days? (Wakefield, 1990, p. 69). No, because the past for which I am longing is saturated with a struggle to attain peace. I do not want

to run away from the present because of its violence, but rather to stay and contribute to changing it and building a future.

I do not want to reduce autobiography to an anecdotal method, full of "selective facts that replace careful analysis of the complex and changing realities of the 1990's and the new millennium" (Petras, 2001, p. 6), for instance.

I do not want to relive the past; I want to rescue that past—the insurgent memories that can help me to fight in the present for a better future. This autobiographical writing, "concerned as it is initially with past experience, is written from the perspective of the present and stands poised to assist the writer in making hypotheses or predictions about the future" (Graham, 1991, p. 13). This is the temporal dimension of autobiography.

The Context

> In 1944 three dictators from Central America are overthrown: Maximiliano Hernández Martínez from El Salvador, on May 9; Jorge Ubico from Guatemala; and Tiburcio Carías from Honduras. The popular movement pays the price, and sectors of the bourgeoisie profit. In El Salvador democratic liberties are given, but this "break' only lasts 5 months and 9 days. On October 21, 1944, the colonel Osmín Aguirre y Salinas reinitiates the military tyranny that had been briefly interrupted.
>
> On July 30, 1945, my older brother Adolfo is born.

Once Upon a Time . . .

My older brother and I are born in the context of a military tyranny, exercised by a military regimen, headed by military governments. We are born when General Salvador Castaneda Castro is in charge of the dictatorship, from March 5, 1945, to December 14, 1948.

<u>Scene 1</u>

Three women are in a living room.

Woman 1: A few days before my son was born I suffered from the black malignant smallpox that puts children in grave risk. So, besides being born "negrito," "maicillito," and straight-haired, it was very likely that he would be born deaf, mute, and blind.

Woman 2: We, the friends and the neighbours, were waiting expectantly for the day to arrive . . . the boy born negrito, "maicillito," and straight-haired and . . . .

Woman 1: Happily, with very good ears for listening and learning (and between us, with big ears to hear big things). . . .

Woman 2: Also he had a tongue that would invent exquisite gossip ("A true son of his native village," some will say later).

Woman 3: About the eyes. . . . certainly they weren't beautiful. Yes, small and with puffy eyelids they were. From the moment he opens his eyes, little nuggets of gold, he examines that room. A tiny room, . . . three by three metres. His first impression was of a profound sadness from which he would never shake free.

Woman 2: Later, he saw us with his little black eyes. And in truth, I do not know if it was the abundance or the scarcity of love that he found around him that made his eyes quickly become messengers of love. (Salegio, 1993, pp. 2-3)

All this happens on June 11, 1947.

"Psychoanalytically, *currere* as interpretation of experience involves the examination of manifest and latent meaning, conscious and unconscious content of language, as well as the political implications of such reflections and interpretation" (Pinar, 1995, p. 521). However, *currere* is not psychotherapy "to treat symptoms" (Grumet, 1976; as cited in Graham, 1991, p. 132). In this autobiographical study there is no intention to search for traumatic experiences, "retrieve," and treat them. Conversely, I conceive of autobiographical writing as a kind of bonding activity, which Greene (1975; as cited in Graham, 1991) called "reflective self-consciousness" (p. 15).

An Early Child With a Restrained Childhood

Coming to my "first world": A 3 x 3-meter room.

When I was born I had two little dark eyes fuelled by love. "This is not a good sign," notes my great-grandmother. There is a 3 x 3 meter room, a clay brick floor and four white walls, a brown dining room table and four chairs, black living room furniture, a centre, round table, two rocking

chairs, a sofa, a brown wardrobe, a sky blue child's bed, and three cots. Where is the stove? I was born here, into a typically unintegrated Latin American family, to a 17-year-old mother, a lovely grandmother, and my brother, who is three years older than me. This is a poor family, living in one of the smaller rooms in the "meson de los Caturria."

Discovering my "second world": The mesón (the rooming house).

The 'facilities of the meson,' such as the outhouse with its wood floor, the 'throne,' and its permanent odour, has to be shared. The stone path around the garden. "A place," the landlord says, "to play silently and properly." There is a beautiful garden that the renters could only contemplate from afar. "Don't take a leaf or a flower!" Of course the children are not allowed to touch, or talk to, or play with those plants or flowers. In a corner of the rectangular garden is the laundry area, with a stone concrete thing to use for washing clothes. There the women meet and gossip with each other. Also it is the arena where they argue, shout, and fight among themselves.

The context.

On December 14, 1948, a group of young militaries overturns the government of Salvador Castaneda Castro. The Consejo de Gobierno Revolucionario (Revolutionary Council Government) announces radical changes on the political situation of the country (Salegio M., 1989, p. 72).

Certainly, there are some changes, but soon the oligarchy's pressure castrates the reformist tendencies of those young militaries (p. 72).

I am 1 year, 6 months, and 2 days old.

There are stories about me that I am going to tell to others, and to myself. Since the late 1970s and early 1980s "the notion of Self as a storyteller came on the scene—the Self telling stories that included a delineation of Self as a part of the story" (Bruner, 1990, p. 111).

The tractor is mine! Playing on the sidewalk and in the stone street: My "third world."

The little boy stops suddenly, grabs his mother' skirt, and stares intensely at my favourite toy. Those two little black eyes, fixed on my wind-up tractor, alarm me. I hold it, shouting, "No! It is mine!"

One month ago, at Christmastime, my father gave me this tractor, which I had been dreaming of for a long time. Since then I play with it all the time, every day on the sidewalk—alone or with my brother and/or cousins. I always play with my wonderful tractor and its little white driver. I am proud because on the block where I live, or maybe for two or three blocks, I am the only one who has a machine to plough, clean streets, and carry many things. In the huge "El Calvario" where I was born, and "Santa Lucía," the territory where I move, I have not seen anything like this!

"I want it, Mama!" shouts the little guy, pointing at my tractor. "I want it! I want it! I want it!" he demands, while pulling down his mother's skirt. I cannot hear what his mother replies because his shouts are now very loud. His two little black eyes remain fixed on my tractor. It scares me more and more. I hold my tractor and shout, "It is mine! My dad gave it to me for Navidad!"

I am not sure when exactly my resistance broke down. Now the little guy is sobbing. His two little black eyes are completely inundated with tears. "Okay, take my tractor, but do not tell my mom." While I extend my hands, giving him my precious tractor, I am very, very sad because of what my mom will do when she knows. . . . At the same time, I feel good because the little guy, when he gently takes my tractor, stops crying, looks at me, and smiles. . . . His mother says that God will pay me back something for something. I am not clear about what she says because my mind is busy.

Nobody is here. Nobody sees me. If my mom knows what I have done. . . . No, she must not know. What would she do if she knew? Oh, my God! Why did I not think before I gave away my tractor? I should not have done that! But that poor little guy wanted that toy. No, I do not regret giving him my tractor, but I am scared of my mom. She is very severe. I have to be careful. She must not know! What would she do if she knew? She would spank me one, two, three, . . . many times! Then she would complain for many days. Then she would shout at me, "Who suggested that you should do this silly thing? Now you do not have a single decent toy! Now you will play with stones and sardine cans! I will not buy you a toy like this. It is too expensive; I have no money! You know how I have to work hard to feed you; to dress you, to . . . and take, take, take! . . ." I am afraid of her strong arm, but her long complaints and shouts day after day terrified me. No, she must not know. I should not have done what I did. No, I should not have given away my tractor. But that little guy wanted it! And I did not want him to cry.

The context

On September 14, 1950, the Colonel Oscar Osorio, one of those young military officers, "wins" the election as president of the country. Very soon

this government shows its true essence: "a representative government of the oligarchy and imperialism, even including interests of the industrial bourgeoisie and some of the democratic bourgeoisie" (Dalton; as cited in Salegio, 1989, p. 73).

This government makes some changes based on the rise of the price of coffee. The Comité de Reorganización Obrero Sindical Salvadoreño (CROSS) fights for the practical right to unionization and the independency of the worker movement. The Osorio government responds with repression, persecution, captures, tortures, exile of politicals, students, and union leaders. The CROSS is outlawed. (Salegio, 1989, p. 75)

I am triple three: 3 years, 3 months and 3 days.

What Autobiography Is as a Method

Autobiography, explained Bruner (1990), is "an account of what one thinks one did in what ways for what felt reasons" (p. 119). It is a process of constructing the Self with their "turning points." Autobiography is "an account given by a narrator in the here and now about a protagonist bearing his name who existed in the there and then, the story terminating in the present when the protagonist fuses with the narrator" (p. 121). And reviving stories from my past, maybe the Self as narrator tries to justify what happened, and the Self as protagonist is surely looking to the future (p. 121).

The Context

On September 26, 1952, Salvador Cayetano Carpio is captured the third time with his wife. The sinister El Chele Medrano is leading the repression, applying brutal torture to the political prisoners. Within a session of torture Carpio is tempted to give up his resistance to die. But he reflects:

> . . . It would not mean an attempt to a shameless escape? Is it right to abandon the people, workers and peasants, in a moment when they need all their men more? The life, my life, belongs to me exclusively or belongs to my people? No, the life of a conscious worker does not belong just to him, but to his people, to his brother in the suffering and exploitation. A conscious worker does not have the right to abandon himself to death or accelerate it to avoid any kind of suffering, natural or extraordinary, that comes,

> until the last breath of his life belong to the workers and his people. The opposite is to escape from duty. (Carpio, 1981, p. 25)
> I am 5 years, 3 months, and 15 days.

In doing autobiography I am not just reflecting on what I am, but what I am within the frame and related to the world. I am doing autobiography "as writing the self," as a "method of reflecting the self in lived experience" (Graham, 1991, p. 120).

The Context

> The government sides with U.S. imperialism and even collaborates to overthrow the Guatemalan democracy in 1954.
> I am 7 years old. . . .

"Autobiography as text, as fiction, as an aesthetic artifact that represents the way in which we have chosen to order and interpret our experience, is primed to reveal to us the nature and extent of our freedom" (Graham, 1991, p. 123). In fact, we must be free, spontaneous in telling the stories of life in our own ways. On the other hand, like other aspects of life, we must consider that educational experience "is reordered into 'a usable past (and) into a usable present'" (Grumet, 1976; as cited in Graham, 1991, p. 123).

The Context

> Colonel José María Lemus (1956 - 1960)
> Initially, there is certain margin of political freedom. Exiles return, workers, students, little bourgeois, professionals and political parties begin to reorganize (Salegio, 1989, p. 76).
> In June 11, 1956 I am 9 years old.

An Overview of the History of Curriculum as Autobiographical and Biographical Text

Curriculum as autobiographical and biographical text can be tracked first to two sources: "*Currere*: Toward Reconceptualization" (Pinar, 1974b, 1975e)

and "Toward a Poor Curriculum" (Pinar & Grumet, 1976). These two authors introduced an autobiographical theory of curriculum. Students may outline "the relations among school knowledge, life history, and intellectual development in ways that might function self-transformatively" (Pinar et al., 1995, p. 515).

Conservative curriculum scholars have been attacking curriculum as autobiographical and biographical text, calling it "mystical alchemy," "emancipation from research," and "solipsistic and purely personal" (Pinar et al., 1995, p. 515). In spite of these attacks, curriculum as autobiographical and biographical text has become a "major contemporary curriculum discourse" manifested in three major streams: (a) autobiographical theory and practice that includes concepts of "currere, collaboration, voice, dialogue, journal, place, poststructuralist portraits of self and experience, and myth, dreams and the imagination" (p. 516); (b) feminist autobiography whose major concepts are community, the middle passage, and reclaiming the self (p. 516); and (c) understanding teachers biographically and autobiographically. This includes collaborative biography and autobiographical praxis, the "personal practical knowledge" of teachers, teacher lore, and biographical studies of teachers' lives" (p. 517).

Autobiography has also been used in theatre (to understand racial issues, for instance) and teacher education. Furthermore, autobiography has historical antecedents: "Curriculum and life history was obvious to the Calvinists" (Pinar et al., 1995, p. 517).

The Context

> 1957. Several organizations are formed: Confederación General de Trabajadores Salvadoreños (CGTS), Movimiento Revolucionario Abril y Mayo, Asociación de la Juventud Cinco de Noviembre, Fraternidad de Mujeres Salvadoreñas. The economical crisis hits the popular sectors (low salaries, unemployment, etc.). The organizations pressure the government to take measures to cope with the crisis. . . . The popular fight increases.
> . . .
>
> I am 10 years old.

Autobiographical Theory and Practice

Contemporary efforts to understand curriculum and autobiographical and biographical text started with the introduction of the concept of *currere* (Pinar, 1974b: Pinar & Grumet, 1976). "The method of currere is a strategy devised to disclose experience, so that we may see more of it and see more clearly" (p. vii).

School Days

> I don't know why I failed Grade 1, though maybe it was because at 6 years old I wasn't able to speak clearly. Who knows? The case is that I did not learn reading or writing. In the final vacation my young aunt Dorys performed a miracle and taught me to do both. After that I repeated Grade 1, and everything was easier than it had been the year before.
>
> I studied in Grade 1B, and I felt happy because I had always identified the section B with *bueno*. To the contrary, in my child's perception, section A was the opposite, something bad. The exception was the Grade 1A teacher. Everywhere I met her she stopped in front of me, slowly took my chin in her hand, and, looking intensely into my eyes, she would caringly say, "Boy, what nocturnal eyes you have!" I liked to hear her sweet voice. Though I wasn't used to saying, "Thank you," I only kept my eyes on hers and smiled and sighed.
>
> When I repeated Grade 1, section bueno, I used to accompany my teacher as she walked to school. Every day at 1:30 p.m. I went to her house and carried her supplies to school for her. I felt proud to do this. I liked that my classmates saw me walking beside my teacher. After awhile she got a boyfriend who always accompanied her. However, I proudly continued to do my job, walking behind the couple.
>
> Once at the celebration of "Child's Day" at school, I won a competition. The teacher who was the master of ceremonies asked, "Who can tell me five words that begin with the letter H?" I jumped from my seat and ran through the crowd of children and stood beside the teacher in front of the microphones. Then I said rapidly and clearly, "Hormiga, huevo, hombre. . . ." I mentioned five words with confidence. When it was over, I felt very proud of myself. As a prize I received a set of three handkerchiefs. (I think they were my first 'man-sized' handkerchiefs.)

Before 1974, theory was interested in the autobiographical method in *Working From Within* (Pinar, 1972) and *Sanity, Madness, and the School* (Pinar, written in 1972 and published in 1975). Later, Pinar identified his 12 intersecting

effects of traditional schooling (Pinar et al., 1995, p. 518), such us "hypertrophy or atrophy of fantasy life," "division or loss of self to others via modeling," and "dependence and arrested development of autonomy" (p. 518).

But . . . Not Everything Was Pink

> Reading Chamoiseau (1997), I recall others and my own lived experiences. In fact, I am able to remember that it is the Señor Bardales who "approached him with languid menace" (p. 38). And what a fresh memory I have of that teacher—whose name my memory resists retrieving at this moment—which used the ritual of "*Who can tell me what day, of what month, of what year this is?*" (p. 40). I believe that in teaching and parenting there are tedious routines that are expressions of the very limited creativity of parents and teachers. If we add the tone and mood that those "dry" teachers and parents display, the result is grievous torture. And how many times in my childhood did I feel that my life "was saved by the bell"? (Chamoiseau, 1997, p. 40). Oh, my God, how the description of those teachers matches that of my own teachers!
>
> > ". . . Captain of his ship by divine right, the teacher ran absolutely everything. He and he alone gave permission to stand up. To sit down. To open one's mouth. When he spoke, all eyes and ears were to be trained on him. Pay attention, look alive, and sit up straight" (Chamoiseau, 1997, p. 41).

Pinar continued working toward an autobiographical method. He claimed that curriculum traditionally "had forgotten the existing individual" and his/her experience (Pinar et al., 1995, p. 519). "I am lost in a world not of my making, in a personality not of my making. How can I constitute the already constituted?" (Pinar, 1978; as cited in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 520). He pointed to the "biographic functions" (p. 520).

Retrieving Pieces of an Irreverent Beginning

> Every Sunday morning I climb a branch of this old Amate tree. This tree is my accomplice in dreams, in love, and my loyal *compañero* of the pains of my early teen days. I read the comics of *La Prensa Grafica*, one of the two big newspapers in El Salvador. Now I am reading over the national and international section. This one is saturated with news from a "revolution in Cuba." (Where is Cuba?) Here! Here is a map. Wau! There are a lot of photographs of bearded men wearing green clothes and hats. They look very happy. They say they are overthrowing a "dictator Batista." Hey!

Now I remember that last year I read in *Life Magazine* about these guys with their long hair and beards. Oh, yes! There are women too! All of them are holding firearms! There are also many *guajiros* wearing hats and raising machetes. They look very confident and content.

Why not try to hear the international news? I move the dial on my old radio, pull up its antenna, and turn the dial for 5, 10, 15 minutes. Finally I hear a march, TATATATA TATATATA TATATATAT. . . . And then I hear "¡Radio Habana Cuba, Territorio Libre de América!"

Today is Jan 1, 1959. I am 11 years, 6 months, and 21 days old.

The Context

The triumph of the Cuban Revolution invigorates the popular fight in El Salvador. The Salvadorian government persecutes, captures, suppresses the organization, meeting expression freedoms, destitution of public servants, exiles, etc.

The Concept of Voice

Voice is a very important concept for understanding curriculum as autobiographical and biographical text as well as in feminist and political theory. Janet Miller, D. Jean Clandinin, and F. Michael Connelly have emphasized the concept of voice. For Grumet (1990a; as cited in Pinar et al., 1995), voices might express the "self- affirmative, self-differentiating complexity that is a woman voice" and the "objectifying, voyeuristic male voice"; and "woman as a meaning maker is undermined by the visual emphasis on her body as an object of display and desire" (p. 526).

The Context

1960

Fight against the Lemus government. On October 26 progressive sectors of the bourgeois and the army overturn the dictatorship Lemus.

I am 13 years, 5 months, and 15 days old.

I am in Grade 6, and I like to read and listen to the news.

How This Study Fits Within Autobiographical Research

> The autobiographical project is also concerned with reconstructing and bringing into focus the nature of the transactions that have been instrumental in making us who we are. (Graham, 1991, p. 66)

In other words, throughout this autobiographical journey I am constructing myself by creating a sort of fictional representation. The first audience and interpreter of my "product" is me (Graham, 1991, p. 66). I am embarking on "the unending journey of self-realization, through whatever medium" (p. 66); I am going to use words and music that contain dreams, letters, reflections, memories, and so on. In a way I am becoming the maker of my "own life stories" which "represent myself to the world" (p. 66). However, it is not an act of isolation because individuals "are always in a social context" (Dewey; as cited in Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. xxvi). It means that experience is commonplace, personal, or social. Hence, the experiences to be relived are experiences that can be explained only in a social context.

The Context

> La Junta Cívico-Militar de Gobierno (October 26, 1960 - Jan 24, 1961)
>
> Political prisoners are released, re-establishes the citizens rights: expression, organization, to create conditions for free elections in which the left is preparing to participate; also establishes diplomatic relations with Cuba. . . .
>
> The imperialists and oligarchy are alarmed, and they are conspiring. . . . They overturn the progressive government on January 25, 1961. There are involved some members of the military mission from USA and military delegates of Guatemalan president Miguel Idigoras Fuentes. The dictatorship from Guatemala pays the debt to its partners in El Salvador. In 1954 the government of Oscar Osorio had contributed to overturning the democratic government of Colonel Jacobo Arbenz.
>
> And, again people are repressed.
>
> I am still 13 years old. I am upset; I would like to be in San Salvador! I do not say anything to anybody. However, I am going to start junior high school and must prepare. . . .

Perception is the key to "revisiting" the settings of our past. "Perception is our presence at the moment when things, truths, values are constituted for us,"

so there is no surprise that "what seems crucial is the noticing, the active insertion of one's perception into the lived world" (Greene, 1995, p. 74).

The Presence of Autobiography in Education

Greene (1995) states that education has much "forgetfulness" (p. 74). She explained that we, teachers, divert our students "from their own perceived landscapes and shapes." Instead we insist in "predetermined explanatory frames" (p. 74). This is simply meaningless and has no motivation at all. In doing this we are losing the "connections between the young and the objects, images, articulations, and other people with which they have been enmeshed." That is, "the true conditions of objectivity itself" (p. 74).

And . . .

> (1961/1962). I read the papers and anguish about what happens in the country and in the world. In El Salvador politics is a mess led by the oligarchy and militaries. Cuba has faced one invasion supported by United States (Bay of Pigs on April 1961). Also there has been a crisis of October 1962, where missiles were involved.
>
> However, worries about girls saturate my life. Maybe they do not know, maybe they do not care, but I love them, all of them! . . . As a result I have mediocre results in Grade 7 and more than worse in 8.
>
> So my grandma and my aunt talk about my failure, conspire, and plan. Then one day in January 1963 my grandma takes me in my older brother's truck. They leave me in an unknown place. I feel uneasy. I do not know anybody. After a while, some boys approach me and invite me to play *futbolito* (soccer played on a basketball field, with small goals and a little ball). I am playing.
>
> Later they tell me that in this boarding school that trains elementary school teachers, there are boys and girls. Ah! I say, and my anxiety evaporates. Accompanied by Mario and Victor, I start to explore my new "home" where I will continue my intense years of adolescence while I get the training to become an elementary teacher. The situation of the world, Cuba, and my country will take a break on my scale of worries.
>
> I am 15 years, 6 months, and some days old.

As an educator I must look for the place of autobiography in education and the curriculum, in spite of the tendency to deny that autobiography or autobiographical writing contributes substantially "to our knowledge of education and the curriculum" (Graham, 1991, p. 2). Hence, it is easier to see autobiography as a genre that is interesting to some literary scholar and to be blinded to its multiple presences in important fields of education (p. 2). Thus, autobiography is a powerful source that has to do with "conceptions of knowledge and the forms of knowledge; theories of the self, of personality, and of identity; psychological ideas of development; theories of language and learning," and even "the use of autobiography as an instrument of research" (p. 3). There are, in fact, specific sites where "autobiography presently does the work of informing and guiding a number of important educational projects" (p. 3) such as language arts or methodology for teacher education courses. But even more fundamental is the fact that autobiography is first "a legitimate field of knowledge whose inclusion in the curriculum can be defended on strictly rational grounds." Second, autobiography is "at work in a number of fully developed contexts within education and the curriculum" (p. 4), which insists that autobiography occupy a place in the curriculum. Autobiography might be used in language arts, social studies, or health education or be used methodologically by instructors in universities to encourage students to reflect on their personal experiences (p. 5).

If we examine the passive or receptive aspects of language arts (reading and listening) and its active aspects (writing and speaking), we will realize that even "reading and interpreting themselves are somehow autobiographical" (Graham, 1991, p. 7). In fact, there is "no meaning without a reader, but the meaning resides in the reader's experience, all of it, states of emotion included. In other words, we as readers are active; we 'write' the texts we read" (p. 8).

In sum, autobiography "as writing the self involves dealing immediately with issues that are fundamental to education and curricular discourse as a whole" (Graham, 1991, p. 11). In addition, "talk and writing function for pupils to

bring about a personal context for whatever the pupil is to learn" (p. 11). This "expressive speech" is "close to the self of the speaker" (p. 11), but "learning from each other and learning with each other are inextricably woven together" (p. 11). Accordingly, learning is not the bare "acquisition of inert knowledge" (p. 11). As well, autobiography works as a method that allows me to "retrieve" hidden or forgotten aspects of myself (as an individual; p. 13).

> The student who is given the opportunity of writing autobiographically will, it is asserted, become a more responsive and responsible teacher, since this attempt to re-create the past will reveal "the intimate relationship between existence and education, between self and culture" (Abbs, 1976, p. 148). (Graham, 1991, p. 14)

Let's see what I wrote in one of my graduate courses.

Reliving My Second World: The Meson (The Rooming House)

> I was born in a family that was *pobre de solemnidad* (extremely poor). I was born in a *meson* (a rooming house). That *meson* was rectangular. To the front, facing the street, was the house of the tenants, with a huge corridor. Beside it was a *zaguán (*a common entrance for the renters of the interior rooms). Beside the *zaguán* was the only exterior room, occupied in those days by Juancito Ticas and his family. In front of the *zaguan* were the common *lavadero* (a stone washboard mounted on a concrete base), the water pipe, and the *pila* (a washtub). This place was a point for the renters to converse, gossip, and fight. They used to dispute their turn at washing their clothes or dishes or getting their drinking water. The interior rooms were facing a stone path that circled a flower bed. I still can hear the insistent commands of my mother, my grandmother, and every adult: "Moris, don't touch the flowers! They are to be seen, not touched." They repressed my sense of touch, but not my sense of smell! I enjoyed the pleasant essence of the flowers of *mirto* and *jazmín*. Unfortunately, in the hottest hours, that gratifying smell mixed with the stench from the *excusado* (outhouse), another common place for disputes to be raised while people were waiting for their turn at certain hours of peak demand.

According to Graham (1991):

> Experiences of the past provide a fund on which we can draw at any time; but this funded experience is only truly available to the child as he or she

> is guided within a social process that attempts to develop the mental tools and habits necessary to utilize that fund. (p. 55)

Nevertheless,

> *currere* reminds the child that he or she is distinct from the non-ego, the curriculum. Of course, the point is not to cultivate an adversarial relationship between the school and the child, but to establish sufficient distance so that the child will not be subsumed in the school or alternately, submerged in his experience. (Pinar, 1995, p. 522)

But *currere* does not "attempt to draw material from the student's resistance" (p. 523). Furthermore, *currere* "does not aspire to alter basic personality tendencies; it offers to students and teachers a method by means of which greater access to their lived experience of schools can be accomplished" (Pinar & Grumet, 1976; as cited in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 523).

The Self

Graham (1991) believed that

> the self is constructed "throughout a process of interaction with an environment, is always a social and ethical self, a self that if its most characteristic feature is its capacity for change, never does so in isolation, but always in relation to a community of others. (p. 45)

In other words, "implicated in the education of the individual, woven into the attempt to provide opportunities and moments for self-discovery and for self-knowledge is the realization of one's connectedness to others and to society" (p. 45). And furthermore, "How can an individual get outside of himself (experientially) in such a way as to become an object to himself?" (Mead, 1995; as cited in Graham, 1991, p. 52). And, more clearly, "rationality and intelligence itself begin in the crucial moment when an individual starts to take an objective, impersonal attitude to himself and to his experience" (p. 52). If mind is socially constructed, then "the self, as that which can be an object to itself, is essentially a social structure, and it arises in social experience" (Mead, 1959; as cited in Graham, 1991, p. 52). The concept of "generalized other" means that

> our fullest selfhood cannot be achieved until we are capable not only of taking the attitudes of others toward ourselves and making them part of our experience, but also of internalizing their understanding of the commonly held beliefs developed as part of a social group. (Graham, 1991, p. 53)

To summarize, the self is social. For instance:

> The undersigned head of the Civil Registration Certifies: that on page two hundred forty nine it literally says: P No 746- DOUGLAS MAURICIO RAMIREZ, male, ladino, Salvadorian, was born at eleven hours of day eleven of the current year in the barrio El Calvario of this city, being the illegitimate child of Julia Haydeé Ramírez, who is from this city. Data submitted to the Undersigned Mayor of this city, Mrs. Candelaria Orrego, as recommended by the mother of the newborn, who did not sign because she does not know how to, but at her request does. . . .

In El Salvador, until recently, there were three categories of children. *Legitimos* (legitimate) were those whose parents are married, and *naturales* were those whose parents were not married (but the local community knew who the father of the child was). If the father legally recognized the *natural* child as his son or daughter, the child was called *natural reconocido* (recognized natural). The third, more discriminatory category is *hijo ilegitimo* (illegitimate child); for instance, as on the above birth certificate. In the town where I was born, it was publicly known who my father was. I was orally a "natural hijo de Carlos Salegio," but my birth certificate does not mention his name; thus I do not "classify" as a "natural recognized." When I have to complete legal documentation and give personal data, I am asked, "Legitimate?" "Illegitimate?" or "Natural recognized?" I must respond, "Illegitimate."

And we are generations and generations of "illegitimate" children. Is this massive abuse and machismo, hidden in the lap of a sick class system, fair? Should I be quiet, indifferent, and submissive?

So I grew up asking why this could happen. One day in 1986 I gathered my courage and asked my father to give me his last name. He said "Yes," and I confess that in my soul I was not expecting a negative answer. We went to a barrister to make the change; from then on I became Douglas Mauricio Salegio

Ramirez, known by Douglas Mauricio Ramírez. Soon, I changed the last name, Ramírez, of the six children I had then.

I may think that I am possessing something that is entirely mine and "inviolable" (Irving; as cited in Levine, 1992, p. 250). However, the self is vulnerable to "oppression and falsity" (p. 250). But more important for me is that "the self is an ideal possibility, sole resident of utopia" (p. 252); and furthermore, it is fundamental to me that "the idea of the self came to a form of social and moral claim. A claim for space, voice and identity" (p. 253).

> So, the 'macho man' [my father] ruined the life of that girl who became my mother, left us with no father, no money, and no name. After decades, by my initiative, I purged that brutal injustice with a document from a lawyer. And if that was not enough social prejudice, I jump with surprise! Is it not legitimate to eradicate from the laws these unfair, barbarian—moral, emotional, and physical—deprivations and humiliations of children in my country and other places where this injustice exists?

Closing

According to Dewey (as cited in Graham, 1991), experience can be understood only if we take note that "it includes an active and a passive element peculiarly combined" (p. 56). This means that I am tracking "connections" and recognizing "the ways in which things are interrelated" (p. 57). These are "the intellectual and hence educative aspects of a genuine experience" (p. 57).

Life is not uniform, but "a thing of histories, each with its own plot, its own conception and movement towards its close" (Dewey; as cited in Graham, 1991, p. 63). Moreover, life is not static, but "a process of becoming, one in which the existence of frustrations and problems make the existence of consummatory experiences possible" (p. 65).

Psychoanalytically, *currere* as interpretation of experience involves "the examination of manifest and latent meaning, conscious and unconscious content of language, as well as the political implications of such reflections and interpretation" (Pinar, 1995, p. 521).

> *Pobre de solemnidad* means not only to live as a prisoner in a 3 x 3 room, but in a yard where a child's life is banned: to laugh, shout, run, and even to cry. Moreover, my family was *pobre de solemnidad* because of the frequent lack of something to put in our tummies (whether nutritive or not). And also we used to lack entertainment: the only "toys": stones, sardine cans, sticks; the only place to play was the sidewalk and the stone streets. Moreover, the *pobreza de solemnidad* of my family was even more noticeable because of the lack of a father at home. Years before I was born my grandfather had left my grandmother, and then later my father abandoned my mother.

I am rescuing lived experiences that have been pivotal in different periods of my life (Greene, 1995, p. 76).

CHAPTER THREE:

WHO AM I? MY LOCATION IN THIS PROJECT

Who Am I?

I am who I am. Certainly, my life experiences have been very rich. Bad experiences were painful, but they were lessons of life that I consider that I have learned effectively. Besides, there are many good experiences that I value and appreciate in their complete dimensions. Basically, both good and bad experiences are genuine parts of my life. I am who I am because of these life experiences—the good and the bad.

I Am Who I Am

If I could change those terrible things
Of my intense and complicated past,
I wouldn't be myself.
I would, instead transmute into "he" or "Mr. Y,"
But, I wouldn't be "he," and neither "Mr. Y,"
And I never, ever had met him!
"What would you change if you could change?"
This means to take off some of life's experiences,
which means to change the life itself.
It means "To be or not to be" the same.
It means he who would insist
"I am who I am"
would be another human being.

An Elementary Student Teacher

In 1963, at the Escuela Normal Rural de Izalco, after the first days of adjustment a very strong friendship is born. We are five inseparables, amigos, accomplices in many adventures. These years, as a student teacher, I am very

busy fulfilling all of the curricula requirements; besides, I am a normal adolescent with everything that that implies. In those three years my marks are not the best, but much better than the pathetic results that I had in Grades 7 and 8.

The "Outside World"

I do not notice many things that are happening in 'the outside world.'

> In El Salvador, the government of Colonel Julio Alberto Rivera—who has taken possession on July 1st, 1962—introduces a bill establishing proportional representation in the Legislature, so the opposition gains 20 seats of a total of 52 in the elections of 1964. The same year José Napoleón Duarte, of the Christian Democratic Party, wins the election as Mayor of San Salvador in 1964.
>
> With the Mercado Común Centroamericano (Central American Common Trade), started on 1960, El Salvador widens its economical base (Salegio, 1989, p. 81). However, this "growing" is malformed because the Mercado Común Centroamericano is "under the hegemony of transnationals" (Menjívar, 1986, p. 93).
>
> In the meantime, the Partido Comunista Salvadoreño (PCS), struggles. From 1961, the organization of the working class has fallen down: only seven unions, and of these only three are independent: Unión de Trabajadores Ferrocarrileros (UTF), Refinería de Azúcar (Sugar Refinery), and Bebidas, *gasesosas y cervezas* (beverages: pop and beer).
>
> From 1963 Salvador Cayetano Carpio starts reorganizing the unions, struggling with "economicism, legalism and reformism." In 1965 the Federación Unitaria Sindical Salvadoreña (FUSS) is founded with 14 unions (Salegio, 1989, p. 82). Also in 1964, the communists "start conceiving the ideas of electoral participation" (p.82).
>
> June 21st, 1965, teachers from all over the country come to San Salvador to demand their right to organize. Today is born ANDES 21 DE JUNIO (Asociación Nacional de Educadores Salvadoreños 21 de Junio) [National Asociation of Salvadorian Educators 21 of June]. At our school some teachers are going out. Why don't they share with us, since we are student teachers and soon we will be teaching? I do not think that the silence is a good idea! (Salegio, 1966- 1970, p. 2)

As I said before, I knew these facts and others, little by little, after 1966.

At the end of 1965 I am writing the "private exams," the *"Científico"* tests: math, sciences, and the humanities (mark 6.75); and the "pedagogical" test: all

subjects related to training to become an elementary teacher (7.45). These national exams are written in several places across the country. Thousands of students attend from different Escuelas Normales (colleges that train teachers).

I Am a Teacher!

Today is December 15th, 1965. Two years and 11 months after that day of January 1963 when I felt isolated and lost! Today is a great day! I am proud! I am now 18 years, 6 months, and 4 days old, and I am a teacher!

And then, very proud and with high expectations, I anticipate using what I have learned in psychology, pedagogy, and didactics. I am receiving my diploma (Figure 1).

1966, The First Turning Point of My Life

In 1966 I am looking for a job. I frequently visit *the Dirección General de Educación Primaria* (General Direction of Primary Education). I have copies of my diploma (Registration No 9709, Folio 502, Date: Dec 15th/65), my marks on the Private Examination, and transcripts of my elementary education teaching courses. Months run and I don't find a job. I notice that my *compañeros* and friends from my school are getting jobs. Am I missing something? After months, I am feeling frustrated.

Cuba calls my attention again. I wonder if I can go there. One day I am seated on a bus to Guatemala. My "plan" is go to Mexico and from there to Cuba. My trip lasts only three days. On the frontier of Guatemala and Mexico the immigration officers from the second country require me to give them $200.00 American. Sure, I have only about $50.00. So, very upset by my naïveté, I return. On my way back home I decide to visit my friend Miguel, and I stay with him two months. I go to teach in his rural school, located in the village of Santo Domingo de Guzman, Department de Sonsonate. He has three grades, so I help him with one of them.

MINISTERIO DE EDUCACION

REPUBLICA DE EL SALVADOR, C. A.

LA DIRECCION GENERAL DE EDUCACION NORMAL

Por Cuanto:

Douglas Mauricio Ramírez

ha terminado los estudios reglamentarios en la

Escuela Normal Rural de Izalco

y aprobado los exámenes prescritos para optar al Título de Maestro;

Por Tanto:

En nombre de la República de El Salvador, otorga

a Douglas Mauricio Ramírez

el Título de

Maestro de Educación Primaria

San Salvador, a los quince días del mes de

Diciembre de mil novecientos sesenta y cinco

_____

MINISTRO DE EDUCACION

_____ _____

DIRECTOR GENERAL DE EDUCACION NORMAL DIRECTOR DE LA ESCUELA

_____ _____

SECRETARIO DE LA ESCUELA SUSTENTANTE

Figure 1. Teaching diploma.

After two months I return to San Salvador. There the political electoral campaign is getting hot. The three candidates for president are Colonel Fidel Sánchez Hernández (National Conciliation Party - PCN), Doctor Abraham Rodríguez (Christian Democratic Party - PDC), and Doctor Fabio Castillo Figueroa (Renovation Action Party - PAR).

One day Ramón (another young teacher and a former classmate employed by Texas Instruments) and I are going to the PAR's headquarters on Avenida España in San Salvador. Many young people are coming and going. We are going with a brigade of youths to do a *pegatina* (gluing propaganda on posts and walls). Suddenly, we are running. A patrol of Policías de Hacienda (treasure police) is chasing us! One of the youths is captured. Nevertheless, I am coming back tomorrow. . . .

1966 is the first turning point of my life.

> After an intense and extensive work lead by Salvador Cayetano Carpio, (General Secretary of the Communist Party of El Salvador- PCS), on October 1965 was founded the Federación Unitaria Sindical Salvadoreña (FUSS—Salvadorian Unitarian Union Federation). The organization of workers will grow even more "with the strike movement of 1966 and 1967." (Salegio, 1989, p. 82)

> Since 1964 there electoral work has been reinitiated and promoted by Shafick Handal, another member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of El Salvador (PCS). In the legislative elections of March 1966, the *Partido Demócrata Cristiano* (PDC—Christian Democratic Party) gains 32% of the votes, and *el Partido Acción Renovadora* (PAR—Renovation Action Party) gains close to 8%. In the presidential election PAR promotes a program of five social reforms: land, education, health, housing, and . . . with its candidate Dr. Fabio Castillo Figueroa. *El Partido de Conciliación Nacional* (PCN—National Conciliation Party) wins the elections with 58% of the votes. (Salegio, 1966-1970, p. 3)

Within this context I come to politics.

After the election, the PAR is outlawed. There is a fight to recuperate its legality and, after a while, a fight for the registration of Partido Revolucionario (PR), which also fails.

Then is the attempt to organize the Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario (MNR).

I am in the political front, identified in the electoral campaign with the PAR. However, my involvement will become deeper. . . . One day I come to the building of FUSS and I see a very modest man seated at a small table at the end of a corridor; he is writing. He is Salvador Cayetano Carpio.

> In late 1966 there is an upsurge of union strikes initiated by the workers of the municipal waste management department. In the middle of January 1967 is the strike of the urban-service drivers. Later, the workers of Industrias Unidas Sociedad Anónima (IUSA) begin their strike. This wave reaches its peak with the General Strike of April 1967, initiated by the strike in the factory ACERO S.A. (steel) in Zacatecoluca. There were 35,000 workers on strike across the country and 15,000 more were ready to participate; the number of unions increases again from 14 to 40 (p. 6)

On October 1967 the union of breadmakers initiates a strike that clashes with the bakery owners, and 17 breadmakers go on a hunger strike.

> Comités Obreros de Acción Popular (COAP; Worker Committees of Popular Action) make possible the renaissance of the reorganization of workers whose maximum momentum comes with the wave of strikes from late 1966 to 1967 (p. 6)

8-9 October, 1967: Che

Pain for the loss of Commandant Ernesto Che Guevara. Individual and collective interest was awakening to become aware of his thinking. Before his death, we read *Guerra de Guerrillas* (*Guerrilla Warfare*), and later we read *El Diario de El Che en Bolivia.*

A Secondary Teacher Student

> In 1967 LA ESCUELA NORMAL SUPERIOR (Superior College for Secondary Teachers) has a very well-qualified staff of professors. However, the benefits of studying there have changed radically. Years ago the *escuela* received teachers in service. They were employed teachers who applied and competed to study at the school. If they were successful, while they studied, for three years they received the same salary as they had at school. Years later they cut the scholarship to 200 *colones.* Now it is even less: 125 *colones.* However, the competition to gain access is hard like

before, and the requirements to keep the scholarship is still three years (six terms).

So in 1967 we are wearing a suit and tie every day. I have three complete suits and one sport *saco*. I combine my studies with my active participation before, during, and after the presidential elections. After, I campaign to regain the registration of the Partido Accion Renovadora (PAR), which has been outlawed. My course marks are not bad. I have six courses each term. My teacher of social studies is Lic. Mélida Anaya Montes, a very capable teacher who is one of the main leaders of the union of teachers ANDES 21 DE JUNIO, founded on June 1, 1965. Also, she is the academic head of the school (p. 10).

Later she become the second Commander of the Liberation Popular Forces FPL Farabundo Martí.

The Revenge

The baker man has begun to hum a song. He looks at us like he is examining us. While the paddleboat advances slowly, we, the thirteen youths, members of the HUMANIST UNITY 68, contemplate the water and the mangle of the Jaltepeque estuary.

Now he is singing in Spanish. He smiles at us paternally. We are all between 13 and 20 years old.

A motorboat passes at a regular speed before us. Our boat shakes, but our chests shake even more because five Treasure Police look at us with their ten eyes of beasts.

We freeze; our breaths and eyes are fixed on Mario's back. His hands have started to slip under his shirt; he slowly touches the handle of an old revolver that belongs to the uncle of somebody.

In the middle of the boat, Ricardo's hands are under a towel. He is 13 years old. Behind me Manuel has not stopped talking. He slowly moves a dirty fabric that covers an old automatic 22 rifle that belongs to somebody's father.

In the meantime, with his hands that knead bread, he has raised a paper bag. He is withdrawing crumbs and little pieces of tortillas which he is throwing into the water. He is not smiling but radiates a deep serenity.

The boat of the policemen makes three rounds around us, closer and closer! After, the boat heads for La Herradura harbour. All this happens in brief seconds which feel long, very long.

He starts to sing in Russian. It is the same song that he was singing before.

Four years later, in 1971, at the Jiboa River bend, we are taking a rest during a very long hike. The compañero does not know that we, the

thirteen, have begun to study *Guerrilla Warfare* by Che Guevara and that we have read *Secuestro y Capucha* (*Kidnapping and Hood*). That explains why we have the determination to make sure that nothing bad happens to him during those three-day courses. "But it would be good to know it," he says. "And you, compañero, tell us what did you have in that paper bag?" I ask. He takes some seconds to respond. "It is true, I did not... It is interesting how one can meet in times previous to this war. We had not made any agreement, but neither you nor me were willing to allow ourselves to be captured," he concludes.

Those days we did not eat a "duck" but a pelican that began its revenge while we were on the deep water of the Jaltepeque estuary.

After, we make sure he boards the bus at the La Herradura. All thirteen of us breathe a sigh of relief that we accomplished that enormous responsibility (because of the past and present of that man and his future that we sense). We leave that village in a hurry and search for the path that will take us to Zacatecoluca. We are walking very fast, almost running, looking with anxiety to the sides and ahead.

Almost simultaneously, we discover a grove, located approximately 10 metres from the path. Immediately, we run to that place. There, at 6:00 p.m., facing the coming sunset, we are squatting, suffering the pelican's revenge. The tension of this day in April 1968, which does not have watchwords for us yet, is ending.

Political Events

The first great battle of teachers (February-March, 1968)

Teachers led by ANDES 21 DE JUNIO declare a national strike and are surrounding the building of the Ministry of Education. This strike awakens the consciousness of teachers and contributes to the process of raising consciousness in people in general. I become active in the organization of secondary students in a tent set up on the parking lot.

Municipal and legislative elections of March 1968.

The opposing Christian Democratic Party gains many seats and municipalities, whereas the left gains almost nothing.

Testimony.

In July 1968 American president Lyndon B. Johnson is coming to meet the five presidents of Central America. There is a historical picture taken at Los Chorros Resort: a great giant (Johnson), a giant (Somoza, from

Nicaragua), the Guatemalan and Honduran presidents—of regular height—and a dwarf (Sánchez Hernández of El Salvador).

The students with the General Association of Salvadorian University Students (AGEUS) have prepared a welcome for "the man". We are waiting for him at Independence Avenue, passively and without weapons, but with rotten eggs and tomatoes and with our throats ready to shout, "Yankee, go home!"

The convertible car is coming—with the tall giant, smiling and waving his big hands. When he is at an appropriate distance, those who are on the sidewalks and the walls of the Buses West Terminal throw eggs and tomatoes and shout, "Yankee! . . ."

Suddenly, the National Guards are beating us. We try to resist, but it does not work. They drag us into trucks and take us to their barracks. There they put our names and personal data on files, and after, they beat us again. Later, they accommodate us in a small cell.

It is night when a redheaded lieutenant sprays us with gas several times. He does not leave us tranquil, with his gas, his laughing, his death threats, and his insults.

Six days later they put us in a line in a corridor. The Director of the National Guard, General José A. Medrano, is here before us. I have heard of his record: torturing in the SS of the National Police and the killing of union leaders Saúl Santiago Contreras and Oscar Gilberto Martínez Carranza, and student Balmore Saca, during the first strike of ANDES 21 DE JUNIO, the teacher association, in the first months of 1968.

The general himself teaches us a class on anticommunism. Among other things, he says, "I see Shafick as an enemy soldier, as a soldier wearing the Red Army's uniform, from the Soviet army. How I am longing to meet him on the street to combat with him! I am a soldier of the motherland; he is an *apatride*. Tell him! And you, for this time you are going to be released. Do not continue as *tontos útiles* [useful dummies]!"

October 17, 1968: Julius is born. My primogenital Julius is born in Santa Tecla. A new reason to live, a new reason to fight for a better world!

War between El Salvador and Honduras (July 1969)

In the late 1960s the Mercado Común Centroamericano (MERCOMUN) favours El Salvador, Guatemala, and Costa Rica more than it does Honduras and Nicaragua. These three countries initiate the integration of better resources (productive means), and within the MERCOMUN, industries accelerate. In other words, "El Salvador is mainly exporting manufactured products to Honduras, and imports from Honduras food and rough materials" (Salegio, 1989, p. 84). Also the

Salvadorian capital is "penetrating the Honduran market" (p. 84). Other factors: In September 1968 in San Pedro Sula a wave of political strikes begin that "extended to the Atlantic coast and Tegucigalpa" (p. 84).

Thousands of Salvadorians emigrate to work in the banana plantations of the United Fruit Company and the Standard Fruit Company (in 1960, 30% of its workers are Salvadorian; White, 1987, p. 235). When banana production falls, Salvadorians come to Honduras to look for land to cultivate. There is hostility against Salvadorians.

In June 1969 the Agrarian Law is approved in Honduras to distribute national land. In the first months of 1969 the law begins to be applied, and land that Salvadorians had been cultivating is taken. In May and June several hundred families from Yoro are expelled: a total of 10,000 on June 25th. White (1987) deemed that a grand total of between 20,000 and 50,000 had been expelled (Salegio, 1989, p. 85). Both governments and the media of the respective countries invent terrible stories.

This conflict between the oligarchies of each country is resolved by military means. On July 13, 1969, the military airport of Tocontín, located on the periphery of Tegucigalpa, is bombed by Mustang Corsarios C47s, little airplanes used for irrigating wool plantations, small passenger airplanes. "That same night, infantry forces penetrated to enemy territory. Even though officially the war has not been declared, it has started" (Mena, 1990, p. 68). Officially, war is declared on July 14, 1969, when the Salvadorian army is already inside Honduran territory.

In El Salvador the war propaganda of the government and media gain the support of professionals, unions, and even the leftist organizations—PCS (Salvadorean Communista Party), , AGEUS LLAMA A FILAS (AGEUS—General Association of University Students)—call to join the ranks. "FUSS calling is to not promote labour conflicts" (Salvadorean Union Unitarian Federation), (Salegio, 1989, p. 85). ANDES 21 DE JUNIO (National Association of Salvadorean

Educators) is the only popular organization that resisted the chauvinist wave, keeping its distance from the National Unity promoted by the government.

> We, members of Juventud Comunista, are visiting house to house, reciting that the president Sánchez Hernández is "not too bad" and that General Medrano is "very bad," that each of them represents a faction of the dominant groups in El Salvador. Sánchez is with the progressive faction and Medrano with the more reactionary and criminal forces. Since both factions have contradicted themselves, we must support the progressive with the president.
>
> We put aside the character of class in this pillaging war against the Honduran people. We forget that this conflict is between oligarchies, exploiters of people from El Salvador and Honduras. What a shame! (Salegio, 1966-1970, p. 12)

I Am a Secondary Teacher

I graduate as a secondary teacher specialized in *Castellano y Literatura* (major) and *Estudios Sociales* (minor) on December 1969; however, for some unknown circumstances our diplomas are dated December 15, 1971 (two years later).

Ideological Dispute 1969-70

There are two ideologically and politically opposite positions inside the Partido Comunista Salvadoreño (PCS). These positions have been increasingly arguing for about 10 years. The two main sustainers are Salvador Cayetano Carpio, General Secretary, who opposes the support for the El Salvador-Honduras war, and Shafick Handal, who promotes it. In order to involve members from all levels of the PCS, these two are now presenting their respective position to the leadership of la Juventud Comunista Salvadoreña (JCS) (Salvadorean Communist Youth).

The annunciation (1969).

La anunciación (1969)

Allí andan, de grupo en grupo,
de reunión en reunion

Este, con su ataché y su elegante
figura de funcionario:
Presidente
Ministro
Diputado
Gobernador
o Alcalde
El otro, con su bolsita Lintorrey
y su presencia
—no precisamente de panificador—
pero sí de
sacerdote tradicional,
de pastor evangélico no enriquecido,
empleadito púplico de pueblo pobre o
maishtrito con mil boletos de empeño.

"Es imposible," dice el primero,
"no tenemos montañas
hay una red de carreteras
y, además, muchos habitantes.
Sería un error, una aventura . . ."

-"Las montañas son el pueblo
lo más importante es
el cambio del militante;
cambio de su envoltura
polîtico-idelógica.
En el proceso podemos aprender
—de lo simple a la complejo—,"
dice el segundo.

La disputa termina en 1970:
lluvia de renuncias.

The annunciation (1969)

They are there, from one group to another, from one meeting to another.

This with his attaché and his elegant appearance of an officer:
President
Ministry
Legislator
Governor
or Mayor
The other one, with his paper bag and his appearance
—not exactly like a baker, labourer—
but, yes! Like a
traditional priest,
evangelical pastor who is not yet rich,
a little public servant for the poor town
or a poor teacher with thousands of vouchers from the pawnshop

"It is impossible," the first used to say,
"there are no mountains
there is a network road,
and also, many inhabitants.
It could be a mistake, an adventure."

-"The mountains are the people,
the most important thing is
the change of the militant
change his/her political-ideology wrapping.
We can learn through out the process
-from the simple to the complex'"
says the second.

The dispute ends in 1970:
resignation raining.

1969-1970: Warrior medical doctors.

I do not know why the Salvadorian proletariat party (the Salvadorian Communist Party—PCS) has an Education Commission that includes some young medical doctors. They tenaciously oppose the support of that party for the war between El Salvador and Honduras (July 1969). They nicknamed it *"the useless war."*

A lot of arguments coincide with the day current General Secretary of the Communist Part, Salvador Cayetano Carpio, and those four medical doctors led the resignation on March 21, 1970. Others from other sectors and sections join. Leaders of the Juventud Communist are included. (Salegio, 1966-1970, p. 14)

Closing

This chapter was intended to express plainly why the insurgent nature of this topic is not a matter of fashion but, rather, responds to decades of life experience and dreaming.

It is now time to move to the insurgent past, not just to picture a regressive moment (Pinar et al., 1995, p. 520) based on lived or existential experience, but also to figure out what kind of future (progressive moment) (p. 520) I am longing for. Also, this journey to the insurgent past helps to create an understanding of my position in diverse dimensions: as a teacher, as a researcher, as a dreamer, as a builder. . . .

CHAPTER FOUR:
PICKING UP PERSONAL INSURGENT MEMORIES FROM MY NATIVE COUNTRY

> Ideas do not die in prison. In death you leave them, as an inheritance, to others who will continue dreaming. (Salegio, from prison, June 1982)

Introduction

I am in the *regressive moment*, one of the four steps formulated by Pinar et al. (1995, p. 520). I am going to revisit my past to relive past insurgent dreams that were conceived somewhere and then lost. I am trying to capture my past as it was (p. 520). I need this returning to retrieve dreams that can provide pieces of my background as well as of my position in the current times.

I am going back to the past because only by going back to this past will I be able to face the current globalization age and relive insurgent memories in order to overcome individual and collective amnesia. Writing these stories from the past keeps my memory alive! Memory that is not used vanishes. That is why I want to vindicate my ability to dream. Collecting these memories is like picking up little pieces of my being. This process is probably both pleasurable and painful. These are my own memories presented in varied forms: stories, anecdotes, letters, reflections, songs.

There in my consciousness are those dreams that I want to "retrieve." However, I am not able to withdraw them completely as they were, but rather in little pieces that are like pieces of a puzzle that can be articulated, assembled. There are many paths and many memories in each. Let's see some. . . .

April 7, 1971: My daughter Liliana Haydee is born (when the "no name organization" is 1 year and 7 days old).

August 2, 1972: The Name

It is night and a taxi stops almost at the corner of Avenida España and a street. From the taxi come four men. One of the four men stands at the corner, another by the end of the house.

Two men approach the balcony of the house, and one of them pulls out a five-pound milk can from a paper bag. He hangs the can from a bar beside the air conditioner. The other man is lighting matches, one, two, three attempts to burn something. . . . ¡Ya! He shouts and the four men run to the taxi that has been waiting with its engine running. The taxi speeds away while the fuse burns slowly until the fire reaches the detonating capsule, and the explosion is heard throughout downtown and the northwest of San Salvador.

The next day the national and international press publish pieces of a declaration "from a little group of isolated adventurers" that had detonated a bomb outside the Argentinean embassy. At the international level the incident is understood as another protest against the Argentinean military dictatorship that recently massacred dozens of political prisoners in the prison of Trelew.

In El Salvador, for the bourgeoisie and its press, the bombing is a matter of "terrorism." And for the common people, busy trying to survive daily, the bombing does not generate any expectation.

Nevertheless, underground, some little groups are happy. They are celebrating not only the action of solidarity with the Argentinean people, but they are also "confirming that the popular army fight is possible in El Salvador; they have survived two years with their own effort. They have suffered the loss of compañero . . . and others who could not endure their qualitative transformation, and they have gone; but their places are not empty. This August 2nd, 1972, they have earned a name: "Fuerzas Populares de Liberación—FPL—Farabundo Martí."

The First September 11 (1973)

My heart suffers with the crime against Chilean people and their hero and martyr, President Allende. Imperialism, reactionaries, and militarization again!

September 23: My daughter Kryssialux is born. I am shocked because of the crime in Chile, my daughter, but I am still happy because you have come.

The Powerful Mass Movement

In 1973 the organization and fight of a powerful movement of masses starts. In 1974 the Frente de Acción Popular Unificada (FAPU) is organized. On July 30, 1975, university students protesting the violating of autonomy are massacred; several are dead, and many are wounded. Today the Bloque Popular Revolucionario (BPR) is born.

In terms of revolutionary experience, these popular organizations are permanently struggling for vital demands such as land, regulation of prices of basic food, salary increases, and added or improved benefits. In 1977 the Ligas Populares 28 de febrero LP-28 join. Soon, there is a very powerful mass movement that determines the political conjunction.

October 25th, 1975: My son Douglas Ernesto Yurilich is born. You come in the middle of the most intense decade in terms of the popular fight.

1976: The Christosangría (Blood Bath of the Catholic Church) Begins

> Art 157 Political Constitution:
> Political propaganda by priests or the secular, invoking of religious motives, or taking advantage of the religious faith of people will not be allowed in any way. In the temples, when celebrating acts, cults or religious propaganda, critics to the state laws, its government, or public servants in particular will not be allowed.

With the Constitution in the pages of the commercial press, and with the criminal weapons in hand, a strong and growing campaign against the Catholic Church starts. The pretext? In the first days of January 1976 there is a protest meeting by the Federación Cristiana de Campesinos Salvadoreños—FECCAS—in the hacienda Colima. One of the owners is shot and dies.

1977: Christosangría

Rutilio Grande

El 12 de marzo de 1977
Los criminales de siempre
asesinan al párroco de
Aguilares, Rutilio Grande,
al Sr. Manuel Solórzano
y al niño Nelson Rutilio Lemus

On March 12, 1977
those same criminals
kill the parish priest of
Aguilares, Rutilio Grande,
Mr. Manuel Solórzano
and the child Nelson Rutilio Lemus

Ah! ¡Bestias!
¡Llegan tarde!
La semilla ha volado lejos
y se ha alojado
en la mente y corazón
de decenas
de cientos
de miles . . .

Ah! Beasts!
You are coming late!
The seed has flown far away
and it has settled
in mind and hearth
of dozens
of hundreds
of thousands . . .

Unbelievable But True

The government of Colonel Arturo Armando Molina gives up military aid from the United States, protesting disrespect for El Salvador's "sovereignty." The Congress of the USA made the respect of human rights a condition of aid.

This unusual act of "dignity" happened on March 16, 1977.

"Ojo por ojo, diente por diente"
dice la siniestra Unión Guerrera
Blanca amenazando a los jesuitas
y a otros religiosos el 22 de abril
de 1977.

"Eye for *eye*, tooth for tooth"
says the sinister Unión Guerrera Blanca* threatening the Jesuits and other religious people on April 22, 1977.
*Dead squad, White Warrior Unity

"Haga patria, mate un cura"
El 11 de mayo de 1977 la UGB
asesina al padre Alfonso Navarro
Oviedo y al menor Luis Alfredo
Torres en su parroquia de la
Colonia Miramonte.
La misma noche, el Pdte. Molina
llama a Monseñor Romero
para darle el pésame.

Build the fatherland, kill a priest
May 11, 1977, the UGB kills the priest Alfonso Navarro Oviedo and the child Luis Alfredo Torres in his parish at Colonia Miramonte

The same night, president Molina calls Monseñor Romero to offer him his condolences.

Dang . . .	
Los aguilareños duermen.	People in Aguilares are sleeping.
El muchacho corre desesperadamente	The young boy runs desperately.
"¡La campana! ¡La campana!"	"The bell! The bell!"
piensa mientras corre.	he thinks while he is running.
"¡La campana! ¡La campana!"	"The bell! The bell!"
piensa mientras sube el campanario.	he thinks while he is going up the bell tower.
"¡La campana! ¡Al fin," dice cuando	"The bell! Finally!" He says when
llegan sus manos a la cuerda de badajo	his hands arrive at the rope of the clapper.
¡DANG! Tatatatatatattatatatatata	¡DANG! Tatatatatatattatatatatata
la ráfaga mata a Miguel	the burst kills Miguel
Los siguientes DING, DONG, DANG	the following DING, DONG, DANG
de esperanza-alarma no despiertan a Aguilares	of hope do not awake Aguilares
Aguilares no despierta	Aguilares does not awaken.
La verdad es siempre perseguida	***The truth is always persecuted***
Domingo de Pentecostes	White Sunday
¡Tres meses de penas!	Three months of pain!
¡Tres meses de muerte!	Three months of death!
¡de cuaresma	Of Lent
y Semana Santa!	and Holy Week!
"La iglesia no tiene enemigos;	The Church does not have enemies;
sólamente lo son los que voluntariamente	its enemies are only those who voluntarily
quieren declararse sus enemigos . . .	want to declare themselves their enemies . . .
"La persecución es algo necesario en la	"Persecution is something necessary in the church.
Iglesia. ¿Saben por qué?	Do you know why?
La verdad es siempre perseguida"	The truth is always persecuted."

Says Monsignor Oscar Arnulfo Romero in his *homilia* of today, May 29, 1977.

May 31st: During this rainy night my daughter Juliamaría is born.

Aguilares traspasado	***Aguilares traspasado***
"A mí me toca ir recogiendo atropellos cadáveres y todo eso que va dejando la persecución a la iglesia	I have to pick up abuses, cadavers and all the remains of persecution to the church.
Ustedes son la imagen del divino Traspasado. Esa es la imagen de todos los pueblos que, como Aguilares, serán ultrajados.	You are the image of the holy *Traspasado.* It is the image of all peoples who like Aguilares will be outraged.
Pero si se sufre con fe y se le da sentido redentor, Aguilares está cantando la estrofa preciosa de liberación porque al mirar que traspasaron se arrepentirán y verán el heroísmo, y verán la alegría del que el señor bendice en el dolor"	But if there is faith in the suffering and a meaning for redemption, Aguilares is singing the precious stanza of liberation because seeing that they trespassed they will repent and they will see the heroism, and they will see the happiness of who the Lord blesses in the pain."

Monsignor Romero, first lecture of the day.
(Zachariah 12-10-11), El Salvador, June 19, 1977)

1979: Un año con saldo rojo A year with a red balance

Mayo Negro ***Black May***

May 8, 1979 Massacre of BPR in Cathedral

A protest of the *Bloque Popular Revolucionario* (BPR) approaches the Metropolitan Cathedral. National Police, who are ambushed in cars and trees in the park and parking lot across the street, open fire against the protesters. This cowardly aggression leaves 25 dead and 70 wounded.

My younger brother, a university student, is shot in his right leg. Two of my former high school students are among the dead.

I suffer when I see my younger brother on the bed with his leg hanging from the ceiling. He and I we know what are we doing. I know the possibilities in this war: to be wounded, killed, or captured. However, I wish that nothing more will happen to him!

This protest demands the release of five leaders of the BPR who have been captured by the National Police. Only two are released; one is Facundo Guardado, the same person who in 2000 declares himself an anticommunist and embraces social democracy.

Números Numbers

Until to date 127 persons have been kidnapped.

On May 15, security corps shoots into another protest: one dead.

On May 20, the Metropolitan Cathedral and embassies of France and Venezuela are still taken. More churches are taken in the capital, Apopa, Suchitoto, San Antonio los Ranchos, Aguilares, Santa Ana . . .

Numbers as of today, May 20, there are:
54 dead
70 wounded
25 captured
3 exiles
30 burned vehicles

127 who have disappeared are not included.

May, 22
Protesters are massacred in front of the Venezuelan embassy:
14 dead, 16 wounded. Some of the victims are teachers.

Christosangría: Rafael Palacios

June 20, 1979, priest Rafael Palacios is assassinated in Santa Tecla.
June 21, funeral in the Cathedral. Monsignor Romero asks the authorities to "control these powers of hell and crime":

I ask and demand on behalf of the citizens to investigate and stop this growing spiral of violence.
We can present together the blood of teachers, workers, peasants, and the blood of our priests. This is a communion of love. It would be sad if in a fatherland where the killing is appalling, we could not find priests among the victims. The testimony of the church incarnates in the problems of its people.

Joining With Dignity the Martyrs of This War

24 de junio de 1979

National Guards come shouting to the house of my older brother. A bullet destroys his left arm. The guards take him outside about 10 metres; he is seated on the ground. The assassins shoot his head and then cut his body with machetes. He did not have a firearm. He did not say anything that could provoke the beasts.

I suffer intensely the loss of my older brother! But, at the same time, I am proud of him because he behaves bravely: He does not weep for the pain he is suffering and does not beg the beasts. He faces death with dignity before the uniformed criminals!

Domingo 24 de junio de 1979	**Sunday, June 24, 1979**
Muere el cuerpo; mas tu espíritu	The body dies, but the spirit
Renace en cada uno	revives in
los que aún quedamos	those who are still here.
La muerte llega	Death arrives
como torbellino a tu casa y	as turmoil to your house and
te convierte en un mártir.	converts you into a martyr.
Apagando el verde de tus ojos,	Extinguishing the green of your eyes
quisieron extinguir de los	they wanted to wipe out
campos y ciudades	life's flame
la llama de la vida.	from the country and cities.
Más, el pueblo que todo lo ve	But, people who see everything
y que está en todas partes,	and who are everywhere
nunca olvida.	never forget.
Tu espíritu nos alienta para	Your spirit encourages us
seguir adelante.	to keep going ahead.
Fito:	Fito:
¡VIVES EN NUESTROS	You live in our hearts!
CORAZONES!	

(*LA CRONICA DEL PUEBLO, Martes 26 de junio de 1979, San Salvador,* p. 15)

By coincidence, in the same operation the National Guards kill Bonilla, originally of San Lorenzo and a former student in the High School of San Sebastian (both cities of the San Vicente). Bonilla combats the guards and joins the heroes of our people.

1981: The Program = The Dream

The document *Platform Programmatic for a Democratic-Revolutionary Government* shows with clarity the objectives and tasks to be accomplished in

the first phase of the revolution: revolutionary, popular, and democratic government (towards socialism).

1. Defeat the military and conservative dictatorship of the oligarchy and US imperialism, imposed and sustained against the will of the Salvadorian people for over 50 years; destroy its political-military machinery, and establish the democratic and revolutionary government, founded on the unity of the revolutionary and democratic strengths, on the popular army, and on the Salvadorian people.

2. End the political, economical, and social domination by the landlords.

3. Eradicate the economical, political, and military dependency of our country on Yankee imperialism.

4. Guarantee rights and democratic liberties for all people, mainly the huge mass of workers.

5. Transfer to the people, through nationalization and the creation of collectives and associative companies, the fundamental means of production.

6. Increase the material and cultural level of the lives of the population.

7. Create a new army, based on the popular forces built through the revolutionary process. Patriotic and dignified individuals of the current government forces might enrol.

8. Encourage the organization of people, at all levels and sectors and ways, and active and creative participation in the revolutionary process. Achieve close relations between people and government.

9. Orient the foreign policy and the international relations of our country, following the principles of independency and autodetermination, solidarity, pacific coexistence, equal rights, and mutual respect among states.

10. Achieving the above, to guarantee in our country the peace, freedom, and welfare of the people and the continuity of the social progress.

. . .

Why I would not support this dream to make life more human?

But There Are More Prices to Pay

In 1980 my younger brother is assigned new tasks, and we do not see him again this year. Each time my mom sees a photo of a dead man in the papers, she asks me to check it because it looks like my brother. These days it is common to see bodies of Salvadorians on the streets, in the dumps, in the garbage, creeks, and roads. . . .

We know that he is participating in the revolutionary side, "doing something," but we do not have more information. He is not allowed to call home because of security risks. In January 1981, through the news, we learn that he and another 11 persons have been captured by the Honduran army. He resists the arrest and is shot in his leg.

And More to Pay a Year Later . . .

Bestiario *(excerpt)*
San Salvador, January 19, 1982

January 19, 1982 at 2:00 A.M.
The beasts invade my home.
They cover their badges; they are wearing combat uniforms.
They are breaking doors and plant pots;
They tear up the floor and the ceiling.
They steal watches, pendants, and rings.
They are taking all my books of politics, science, and literature.
They do not leave a thing!

And at seven in the morning, they take us
Through streets that no longer will be ours.
We are looking for friendly eyes. . . .
But some look to the sky,
And others to the ground.

We are hoping for a teacher to see us,
The beasts and their prey.
¡Nada in the Alameda Juan Pablo! ¡Nada!
Maybe in calle Concepción? ¡Nada!
In la Troncal del Norte . . . ¡Nada!

In the hideout, solitude enters through the senses

And settles on the tongue, throat, and chest-stomach.
The jeep rides slowly, . . . a soccer field, and
In the distance, on Cinco de Noviembre Street,
A crowded bus fuelled by students and workers passes.
The siren of a Cruz Verde's car shouts in desperation.

We see the blue sky and the white of the clouds that fly.
The jeep has stopped, and some claws take us and drag us to the ground.
We hear the insults from the beasts that are around the yard;
Our eyes and hand say three times, "I love, I love you, I love you."
And then darkness. The eyes are prisoners.
The hands are being tied. Fingers are greeting themselves.

The tongue is dry. Fear strangles it.

The ear, the skin, and the nose are free
So they can take shifts in this den of death.

Balance

To date, January 1982, our family has experienced varieties of repression. My younger brother was wounded in the massacre of Cathedral on May 8th, 1979. My older brother was assassinated June 24th, 1979. My young brother was shot and captured in Honduras in January 1981. I was kidnapped on January 19, 1982, presented to the media on January 28th, and consigned to the court on January 29th. Kept in prison 18 months, until June 1983.

To the Court

Guardia consigna a los profesores ante el Juez de Instruccion Militar	*Guard consigns teachers before the Military Instruction Judge*
Ingresé a las FPL sin ser asesorado ni presionado por nadie. Lo hice mediante una opción plenamente individual y como resultado de una actitud analítica de las situaciones que está viviendo el país . . .	I incorporated with FPL with no advice or pressure from somebody else. I did it as an individual option and as a result of an analytical attitude on the situation that the country is living in.
Yo no soy de los que reniegan de la noche a la mañana . . . (*Declaración de Mauricio Salegio ante la prensa, 28 de enero de 1982,* Diario El Mundo, 29 de enero de 1982)	I am not like those that give up between night to the morning . . . (Declaration by Mauricio Salegio before media, January 28, 1982 *Diario El Mundo*, January 29, 1982)

Teachers Behind bars

From Mariona Penitentiary to Women's Penitentiary

(August 1st, 1982, ¡Feliz cumpleaños!)
To my wife and partner:
The only thing that I can say to you,
is that I love you beyond these walls.
That I know how much is your value
and that you have been my light and my firm support.
Without you, who knows?
The prison can deprive us from material things,
but our great love is now wider and deeper.
You will see when we see outside;
I will reimburse in permanent delivery
all my love accumulated during these months
behind bars. (Salegio, 1982-1983, p. 6)

Conquest freedom is not a gift

In mid 1982 in the Legislature the possibility of an Amnesty for political prisoners is mentioned. It generates spontaneous expressions of anxiety and hope among the prisoners. There are two risks. First, if the Amnesty comes, it might be misinterpreted as a 'gift' from the government and not as the result of the struggle of the political prisoners and people in general. In addition, our fundamental demand might deteriorate: "The immediate and unconditional freedom of all political prisoners, and to clear the situation of the disappeared and their unconditional freedom."

What is in jeopardy is not only a profound political statement, but a very human demand: We are sure that the bill of Amnesty will not even mention the disappeared. Second, if the Amnesty lasts a long time, it will provoke frustrations and depression among the prisoners.

We are certain in our prognosis. The Amnesty came one year later, and our ideological campaign strengthened the morale of the internal population.

To interpret the recuperation of freedom, not as a conquest but as a gift, as a bonus would mean denying the historical role which the *Comité de Prisioneros Políticos de El Salvador* (COPPES) has earned; it would mean denying all the moral and material support that the people have offered us; finally, it would mean devaluing the efforts of the international solidarity with our fight. (Salegio, 1982, p.2)

June: the month of teachers and teaching

A notion of education for freedom within the context of people's struggle for a definitive liberation (excerpts)

> We ratify our firm confidence in the people's strength to construct a New Society where children will have a childhood, and where there will be developed, with no restrictions, all the potential resources of the people: artistic, technical, and cultural. (Prisoner teachers, 1982, p. 3)

1. . . .

We, teachers behind bars, are still teachers, dreaming of a new society and a new education (June, 1982)

> (Teacher A) The fact of being prisoners is an experience that must be located within the general context of the fight of our people to bring forth a more just and humane society in which education, science, and culture will be a first priority. . . .
>
> (Teacher B) The prison is hard, but the captors have not been defeated. The triumph will allow a just and free society where the child will be the future of his/her new motherland. . . .
>
> (Teacher C) The fight demands more sacrifice of teachers; it demands that we give more if we value the blood of the heroes and martyrs who failed in the path to the brilliant future where there no longer is the repression, injustice, and anticulture that exists today. . . .
>
> (Teacher D) Ideas do not die with the prison. In death you leave them, as an inheritance, to others who will continue dreaming. (pp. 3-4)

2. June is a good month to be remembered
(Excerpts from Prisoner teachers, 13 de junio de 1982)

June is a good month to remember the great journeys and fight of teachers within our beloved *ANDES 21 DE JUNIO (Asociación Nacional de Educadores Salvadoreños 21 de junio)* [National Asociation of Salvadorian Educators 21 of June] : the struggle for the wage scale, the bill of a teaching career, huge campaigns to increase salary and others. All this fighting triggered the achievement of "dignity for teachers." (pp. 5-6).

Seventeen years of fighting, triumphs, and hope have brought happiness in the achievement, but also mourning and pain for the families: deaths, kidnappings, capturings, persecution. (p. 6)

We ratify

1. Our firm morale to continue resisting this prison and all sacrifices that it implies.

2. Our unbreakable faith in the strength of teachers and people that will end up taking us out from these prisons of the regime.

3. Our firm confidence in the people's strengths to achieve a New Society where children will be children, and where will be developed, with no restrictions, all the potential resources of the people: artistic, technical, and cultural—now repressed by the institutionalized violence of the regime and by the social marginalization that reign. (p. 7)

3. To the teachers of El Salvador in their day (Prisoner teachers, June 21st, 1982) (Excerpt)

. . .

Everybody who writes and reads has been related to one or more teachers. As a result, it is very difficult for him or her to forget the soft or strict word, the advice or the complaint, the patience or desperation of the teacher.

Do teachers work to transform material? No! They work with children to make them children and to make them the substance of the new men and women. . . . Children are the clay of life which can be moulded only by teachers with a true vocation.

Today we recall that teachers from the past, full of generosity and sacrifice, left pieces of their lives hanging from fences, in the yards of the little school, and from the decrepit desks. But we also recall them selling their salary to the usurer, suffering humiliations by the major, the judge, the military local commander, or any other individual who had civil or military power.

But today we also recall those teachers who 17 years ago left their classrooms from everywhere in the country and came to San Salvador! The streets were inundated with umbrellas, caps, and coats!

We recall that from then on teachers learned that they could still be generous but with dignity, humble but valiant, simple but firm. They learned that respect for one's situation as a teacher must be earned in the protests, in the assemblies, in the strikes. . . .

The teacher was radically transforming, throwing away a life of humiliation and abuses; instead he/she was feeding dignity with every step. . . .

ANDES 21 de Junio *(Asociación Nacional de Educadores Salvadoreños 21 de junio)* [National Asociation of Salvadorian Educators

21 of June] and teachers are linked to the process of raising the political consciousness and the willingness to combat. This is an unquestionable statement.

But there is something more that characterizes teachers: their bravery and heroism, which allow them to endure the ferocious repression of the enemies of education, science, and culture.

Teachers have not panicked; neither has ANDES been destroyed in spite of almost 200 teachers having been killed and 12 teachers disappearing. . . .

Teachers today might be called "apostles" because there is nothing that devalues this name. Nevertheless, never, never under the pretext of the apostle condition does anyone attempt to humiliate them because the dignity of teachers is not to be given as a gift, is not to be sold, and is not to be usurped with impunity.

Teachers have increased their vocation, enlarged their love for children—love that has been enriched by the love for the exploited and oppressed.

Teachers dream and fight for a new society where justice is imperious, where children play and laugh, full of bread and milk, with clothes and a roof over their heads.

Teachers today firmly believe in the brilliant tomorrow that will be fertile land for prosperous education, science, technology, and culture to benefit people (pp. 12-13).

Tragic April 1983

April 6

The commandant Ana María, Dr. Mélida Anaya Montes, second in command of the Fuerzas Populares de Liberación FPL Farabundo Martí, one of the five organizations of the Frente Farabundo Martí, is killed. Here in the prison we hear a rumour that the CIA has killed her.

April 12

The Commandant Marcial, first in command of the same organization, commits suicide.

How it is possible? Here in prison, we are astonished and confused about what is going on outside.

Outside!

In June 1983 we prisoners are released from prison by a General Amnesty. I am here in the place where officers from Canada, Sweden, and Australia are giving out applications for the recently released people to emigrate to these countries. At the last minute I decide not to apply. Instead, the next day

I am at the Mexican consulate to get a tourist visa. After some weeks in Mexico I am leaving to go to Nicaragua.

In Nicaragua I know two versions of those events of April.

In December 1983 I am again in El Salvador.

The Balance of 1982-1983

18 months of my life has been taken.
I have accumulated experience.
A marriage has deteriorated.
My morale is high. I am going ahead!

Failures in Building

Early in 1984 I am participating in attempts to build something new, but it is a year of failures.

From 1985 to 1988 there are several attempts. The last one is shattered by police through the infiltration of agents and the dirty job of efficient torturers who concoct number of confessions.

Be Careful With El Chele (1985)

The general Alberto Medrano, the "Chele Medrano," retired. Now he is an evangelical pastor. He does this for nine years, until one day in 1985 God asks a guerrilla command to send him to the "other side."

El Chele arrives at a place out of this world that was neither heaven nor purgatory (I think that it is an intermediate place where God is able to visit). Then El Chele wants to impress "the one that sees and knows everything" with his curriculum vitae of the last nine years as a pastor. But God has in His holy hands a very thick folder! It contains the evil things of a whole life. "I will not read it to you because we would take an eternity!" God says. Rapidly, God writes a note in fluorescent ink and gives it to a couple of cherubs. He ordered them to take Chele directly to hell. When they arrive, Lucifer reads the note: "Enemy: I am interested that you live eternally, burning the souls of the bad guys down there. So I am warning you: Watch out for El Chele!"

November 25th, 1985, my daughter Rocío is born.

¡Otra vez! Again!

SAN SALVADOR AUGUST 10,1988

. . .

WE ARE INFORMING YOU THAT TODAY IN THE PROCESS OF INVESTIGATION BY THIS HEADQUARTERS, YOUR HUSBAND DOUGLAS MAURICIO RAMIREZ SALEGIO WAS REFERRED AND ACCORDING TO THE RESULTS OF THE INQUIRIES THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN INITIATED, IN THE PERIOD STATED BY LAW HE WILL BE RELEASED OR CONSIGNED TO THE RESPECTIVE COURTS.

HEAD TECHNICAL ADVICE
NATIONAL POLICE

I am now one of the 56 political prisoners held in different prisons across the country.

Carta: Letter

Mauricio, I love you much, very much. We play very happily!
I finished lesson number 50 of the book *Pablito.*
And also Rocío loves you a lot. Erica wants to see you. Rocio also wants to see you. . . .
We are going to give you many gifts, and also Rocio will give you many gifts.
Erica

El color

(Agosto de 1988, Penitenciaría de Santa Ana)
(A mi padre y a mi hermano)

Detrás de los muros, el "afuera";
y el afuera tiene color:
cielo, mar, lago, volcán, montaña.

Color cielo, mar, lago, volcán, montaña
tiene la libertad.

Sus ojos tienen
cielo, mar, lago, volcán, montaña.
Yo amo la libertad, sus ojos;
y al cielo, mar, lago, volcán, montaña.

Color

(August 1988, Penitenciaría de Santa Ana)
(To my father and my brother)

Behind the walls, the "out side"
and the out side has colour:
Sky, sea, lake, vulcano and mountain

Freedom has the color of
sky, sea, lake, vulcano and mountain

Their eyes have
sky, sea, lake, vulcano and mountain.
I love freedom, I love their eyes;
and sky, sea, lake, vulcano and mountain.

En el vuelo

Hola Meme
Vamos caminando en la montaña
huyendo de las bestias.
Caminando, sudando . . .

. . . ¡Despierto!
con el recuerdo intacto,
con el amor crecido
al pueblito, a sus casas de adobe
y a sus gentes,
*a ti, Meme y a Tania**
en el vuelo del Quetzal.

Tristeza *(Octubre de 1988,*
(Penitenciaría de Santa Ana)

Suena una guitarra en la celda vecina
y una melancólica canción pone su cuota
a mi tristeza de siglos.

Obsesión

Cigarrillo y cigarillo . . .
caminando y caminando . . .
oídos abiertos al anuncio:
"Poeta, ¡vas libre!"

Flying

Hi Meme!
We are walking in the mountain
Running away from the beasts.
Walking, sweating . . .

. . . I awake!
with the untouched memory,
with love increased
to the little town, to its adobe houses
and to its people,
to you, Meme, and Tania*
in the Quetzal's flying

Sadness (October 1988)
(Penitentiry of Santa Ana)

A guitar sounds in the neighbour cell
and a melancholic song adds its quota
to my century of sadness.

Obsession

Cigarette and cigarette . . .
walking and walking . . .
open ears to the announcement:
"Poet, you are leaving!"

Reflection

At the police barracks I did not fail before the torturers! I acted as is expected from a revolutionary. However, here in the penitentiary my morale is low. I cannot forgive some people who did not endure the tortures and confessed. I feel frustrated! What to do? To stay (in my country) and not live, or to leave and live in limbo—I mean in exile?

---

* Meme and Tania are two beloved *compañeros* of insurgent dreams. Both were probably kidnapped by government killers and disappeared in 1988 in Guatemala.

Finally . . . Outside!

San Salvador, November 11, 1988
Of. No. 1828

Mr. Director of the East Penitentiary
Santa Ana

Please release DOUGLAS MAURICIO SALEGIO RAMIREZ, charged with the offense of subversive association, because he has been dismissed and has deposited a respective bail, if he is not processed by another authority or by another case.

GOD, UNITY AND LIBERTY
Lic. Luis Edgardo Morales Joya
First Penal Judge

Closing and Wondering

I am outside! Three times I have fallen into the beasts' claws. After all, I am lucky to be alive. I have resisted the option of exile, but now maybe . . . .

CHAPTER FIVE:

PICKING UP PERSONAL INSURGENT MEMORIES FROM MY ADOPTIVE COUNTRY

Ping Pong in the Prison

I want my freedom, but the judge wants me to leave the country; he may give me a dismissal letter if Canada's Immigration first gives me a visa. Canadian Immigration wants the letter of liberty to give me a visa! My lawyer, the Honorary Consul of Sweden, suggests that I go to Sweden. I am tempted to accept his offer. Finally, Canadian Immigration gives me a Ministry Permit to travel to Canada immediately, and then the judge gives me the letter.

So . . .

My family and I are leaving my country on December 6, 1988. That same night we arrive in Canada through Toronto. And what I find or how I feel is,

It is not the blue that I had imagined
It is not the wide sky that I wanted to see
Strange people
Language unknown
White streets
Loneliness! (Salegio, 1993, p. 74)

Life's experiences and discoveries have shaped my identity and given me philosophical growth: to observe, analyze, and try to change things. I see the dialectic interrelation among present, past, and future. The meaning of the present has to do with the past and the future. The past has shaped my mind to perceive, feel, think, and behave in the present. But the present also interferes in my past to the point that I am not able to relive those past things in the same way that I experienced them for the first time. The future has to do with the past and the present. My background influences my inclinations; the present triggers my conformity or nonconformity, which will feed my positions in the future.

Conversely, the future is in my past when I fought for a more humane society, for instance. But also, the future is in my present when I formulate now that this research will arrive at the end in a Manifesto, document that will conform with my belief that "a better world is possible."

Seguiremos	**We will go ahead**
Hermano, compañero:	**Brother, *compañero***
seguiremos en nuestro	we will continue riding our
Rocinante	Rocinante,
para buscar estrellas.	looking for stars.
Y soñaremos más,	And we will dream more,
y cantaremos más	and we will sing more
a nuestra Dulcinea	to our Dulcinea
patria- nostalgia- pueblo.	fatherland—nostalgia—people.
Esta sorpresa deja	This surprise leaves
más clara la esperanza,	clearer the hope,
más amor a la vida	more love for life
—para gozarla alegres—	—to enjoy it in contentment—
y más firme	and more firmly
nuestra complicidad en los sueños.	our complicity in dreams.

My current autobiographical writing is not my own individual "property" because

El amor a los otros	**Love for others**
La conciencia llama	**Consciousness is calling!**
¡Apenas puede creerse!	It is incredible!
Mientras tú mendigas	While you are begging
la suavidad de su vientre	the softness of her belly
y la locura tibia de sus pechos,	and the crazy warmth of her breasts
¡suceden tantas cosas en el mundo	Many things are occurring in the
que amamos!	world we love!

In other words, I am the result of a process in which I have a role; there is the social participation of others and interaction with them. And this is also the social essence of the autobiography. It is, for instance, what I experienced during my first two years in Canada.

Soledad 1	**Solitude 1**
Este día la soledad	Today, solitude
tiene color, volumen,	has color, has volume:
camina por las calles,	it walks on the streets,
baja de la garganta al pecho.	Goes down from the throat to the chest.
La soledad viaja en los buses,	Solitude travels by buses,
se sienta en la cafetería,	sits in the cafeteria,
va del Centro a la Colonia,	goes from downtown to suburbia
de la Colonia al Centro.	From suburbia to downtown.
La soledad está en la casa:	Solitude is at home:
en la cocina, la sala, el baño;	in the kitchen, the living room, the bathroom;
en mi pequeño cuarto:	in my little room:
en la mesa loca de papeles,	on my crazy table full of papers,
en el caos del piso,	in the chaos of the floor,
en la radio, la televisión . . .	on the radio, the television . . .
¡En todo!	In everything!
Y, de la una a las dos	And, from one to two,
a las tres, cuatro, cinco . . .	to three, four, five . . .
aquí en mi cama	here on my bed
la soledad y el insomnio juegan	solitude and insomnia are playing
y riéndose se burlan de mi	and laughing at me; they make fun
desesperanza.	of my hopelessness

As an educator I am interested in life because life is education, and "education, experience, and life are inextricably intertwined" (Dewey; as cited in Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxiii).

Depresión 2	**Depression 2**
Mis metas andan volando	My goals are flying,
El trabajo más lejos	a job is more distant
que el lejano oriente	than the far west.
El ingreso, más abstracto	Income is more abstract
que el trabajo	than work.
Las deudas se eternizan	Debts become eternal
en "cuentas por pagar."	"accounts to pay"
¿Cuándo me divorciaré	When will I divorce
de la lipidia?	poverty?

In this research I wanted "to study experience" because, as Dewey (as cited in Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) said, "The study of education is the study of life"; and, more clearly, "We learn about education from thinking about life, and we learn about life from thinking about education" (p. xxiv).

Seeing my sadness an old friend asked me one day:

¿Qué estás haciendo aquí?	**What are you doing here?**
"¿Qué estás haciendo aquí?,"	"What are you doing here?"
me preguntó un amigo.	a friend wanted to know.
¿Qué estoy haciendo aquí?	"What am I doing here?"
casado (o en concubinato)	married (or in concubinage)
con la soledad;	with solitude;
cargando una miseria material	carrying a material misery
(que parece congénita);	(which seems to be congenital);
diciendo tonterías sobre el clima;	saying silly things about the climate;
escuchando estupideces pródigas.	listening to massive stupidities.
¿Qué estoy haciendo aquí?	"What am I doing here?"
Planeando y soñando:	Planning and dreaming:
aprender "perfecto" Inglés un día,	to one day learn perfect English;
tener dinero pa' pagar las deudas,	to have money to pay my debts;
publicar mis cuentos y poemas,	to publish my short stories and poems;
estudiar una Maestría de Literatura,	to study for a master's degree in literature;
componer el mundo torcido con mi, análisis	to fix the crooked world with my analysis;
encontrar una, dos, tres o más mujeres	to find one, two, three or more women
para darles mi torrente -volcán.	To give them my torrential volcano.
"Sí, estás planeando y soñando.	"Yes, you are planning and dreaming. But
En tanto, las cosas de la vida,	what about the things of life?"
¿Qué?	

Is writing my memories a way to "understand" my life? (McMillen, 1994, n.p.). I am satisfied that I know and manage my life, but maybe writing my memories will unveil "corners of my life" that are unknown to date.

Angustia 2	**Anguish 2**
Una corriente de ganas de saber	A stream of desire to know
qué pasa en estos inviernos tristes.	what happens in these sad winters.
Con la certeza del refugio prestado	With the certainty of the borrowed shelter
en donde nada es tuyo;	where nothing is yours;
excepto el frío, la soledad gritando.	but the cold, the shouting solitude.
La sumatoria de minutos en horas,	The conjunction of minutes in hours,
las horas en los días	hours in days
(ausentes de sol y de calor humano)	(missing sun and human warmth).
Las semanas corren	Weeks run
y hacen parir un mes	and deliver one month
—en el que nada extraordinario pasa—;	where no extraordinary thing occurs;
excepto "apabullarte el coco"	but overwhelming your head
pa' pagar la renta, el agua,	to pay rent, water, phone, and
el teléfono y la luz.	power.
¿Es esto "subvivir" o "malvivir"?	It is "survive" or "badvive."
La primera palabra es insuficiente;	The first word is not sufficient;
la segunda, puede ser "subversiva"	the second might be "subversive"
para la RCMP.	to the RCMP.

In fact, plenty of passion in my writing and my voice calls others to perceive, name, and break their own silences. The irreverence implicit allows us to gain consciousness. Sometimes it has been vital to sing, recite, and shout; if I kept silence it would become transcendent. My silence would go further than myself, the individual who is silent. My silence would be relevant to others. That is why I do not restrain myself from shouting:

Cólera	**Anger**
Cólera, impotencia, rabia	Anger, powerlessness, fury
¡Contra todo!:	Against everything!
¡Esta situación confusa!	This blurred situation!

¡Estos planes y proyectos sin respuesta!	These plans and projects without answer!
¡Este idioma Inglés que me quita la vida!	This English language that is taking my life!
¡Esta nieve, este lodo, esta porquería!	This snow, this mud, this filth!
¡Este frío asesino!	This assassin cold!
¡Este corazón que me revienta	This heart that bursts
de puro amor, del bueno!	pure love, the good one!
¡Esta cabeza, esclava de mi corazón!	This head, slave of my heart!
¡Estos ojos, estos labios, esta nariz,	These eyes, these lips, this nose,
estos oídos, estas manos, esta lengua;	these ears, these hands, this tongue:
unilateralmente funcionales	unilaterally functional
para cosas del amor!	only for love's matters.

Nevertheless the spaces for my irreverent chant are given by the success in finding others' receptive ears, eyes, arms, hearts, and minds. Then irreverence would really be converting to the insurgent and subversive.

***Decreto** (1993)*	
Estoy imperativo esta mañana fresca	I am imperative this morning.
de abril:	
¡Quiero que el invierno marche	I want that the winter leaves
y no vuelva más!	and never returns;
¡Quiero lavarme con tu risa suelta!	I want to wash myself with your free laugh.
Ordeno: ¡De ahora y para siempre	I order: From now and forever
vivas en paz contigo misma!	live in peace with yourself!
Decido:	I decide:
¡La felicidad de los felices sea eterna!;	Happiness of those who are happy be eternal
y a los otros—que son la mayoría—	And to the others—who are the majority—
sírvanles "per secula seculorum"	serve them "persecula seculorum"
sopa de felicidad,	soup of happiness,
carnes de contentura,	meats of contentedness,
la fruta de la dicha,	fruits of fortune.
el postre de la alegría.	the dessert of joyfulness.
Todo en doble cuota y	Everything in double portions and

en seis veces diarias	six times daily
para reponer la felicidad no gozada	to compensate for happiness not enjoyed
en los años mal vividos.	during years badly lived.

In journeying through the long paths of my memories, I would like to hold the optimism of Connelly and Clandinin (1999):

> Perhaps the most common way of makings sense of the turbulence we observe is that it is a turbulence we will get through. Things will readjust and return to normal. Budget cuts are hurting, programs are being modified but, still, we persist and will ourselves go on. (p. 114)

And yet I am reading that after I dig and dive into my turbulent memories, I will be different, not because I think that retrieving my memories will release traumas of any kind, but rather, simply, because calling and retelling (and writing) those memories will shape my being and renew me (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 115). As the title of this chapter suggests, personally, I used to dream. I was an irreverent dreamer.

Many times I have asked myself if the distance, the cold, and the unknown place where I am now living has killed my dreams, if I am no longer an insurgent dreamer. Let's see.

***Mis manos** (1991)*	***My hands** (1991)*
Mis manos ya no son las mismas;	My hands are no longer the same;
mis manos están cansadas, resentidas, llagadas.	my hands are tired, resentful, sore.
Ellas son ahora instrumentos de trabajo material	They are now tools of material labour.
Desde hace quince días no escribieron nada,	For fifteen days they have not written anything
Ellas están cansadas, ellas están. gritando	They are tired, they are shouting.
Le canto, poeta Pablo, a las manos mías,	I am singing, poet Pablo, to my own hands,
adoloridas para llenarme el hambre, la renta, los recibos, la ronda de cervezas.	in pain, to fulfill my hunger, the rent, the bills, a round of beers.

The Price

Edmonton, Alberta, December 7, 1994 (excerpt)

It is a huge pain. After 20 years of living in exile you discover that you have grown roots here. When you left your country you brought along your children. They did not decide to come; you did this on their behalf. Now, 20 years later, you are returning to your native country, and your children stay here. They are some of the roots that you have grown here.

Maladjustment and "Doxilia"

Technical and academic descriptions and cold statistics are not enough. They do not describe the meaning of maladjustment. The newcomer feels a series of difficulties and problems that constitute the "maladjustment" with which they are living. "Everybody brings their own bag of nostalgias. When one comes to Canada, the most precious help is the recomposition of every little piece of the person that has been "broken." In other words, the newcomer comes to Canada emotionally "broken." He or she is suffering the absence of the things that "there" belonged to him/her. In addition, the newcomer suffers the presence of a strange world: language, people, customs, laws, landscape, weather, etc. The contradiction between "the absent" and "the presence" will be a shock. This provokes an illness I will call "Doxilia."

Doxilia is a feminine name, and apparently not offensive. Even though it is not mortal, it could kill gradually if the patient becomes obsessed with the illness. Doxilia is without a cure. Doxilia attacks the first generation of immigrants, especially those who are parents, grandparents, or children who are older than 10 years of age. A significant number of the children are cured by the time they are 20 years of age, though they often experience a relapse when they are older, most noticeably when they become grandparents. In fact, doxilia does not respect age, race, colour, religion, nationality, or political or religious beliefs.

The main symptoms of this terrible illness are, first, patients suffer continual frustration and depression provoked by the language barrier. Commonly, they develop blocks that affect their learning of English. Second, the "doxilico" suffers continual attacks of nostalgia of "there" and rejection of "here." ("There" has no problems; it is beautiful; "there" has respect for parents. . . . "Here" is perdition for children. . . .) Third, the patients cannot become accustomed to living in a new country. They live with their luggage, ready to return to their country. Though many never attempt to return, they continually dream of it. Those who do return meet a different country, not the one they keep in their memory. Then they cannot go back "there" to live, and at the same time they do not feel that

they belong "here." It is a loss of identity. They are not from "there" or "here." Fourth, doxilicos never accept the reality of change. They strongly reject the possibility of their own personal change, or the change in their family. Doxilia is the price paid by those immigrants who obsessively feel and believe that Canada is a land that belongs to others.

From the above mentioned, it is possible to conclude that the process of adjustment means "illness" for the newcomer. To overcome this period, the newcomer must pass through a process of learning about Canadian society and the tolerance of Canadians. . . .

One more time I contemplate the photograph from the *Edmonton Journal*. It is a picture of a family. Eleven months later the beautiful smiles have been transformed into gestures of pain. That family disintegrates, and my new companion is solitude.

> One night in October 1989 I am running through a park. With frustration and anger in my chest, I run and run. The fresh air of the late night dries the tears that flow torrentially.

I don't know the price that the other people in the photograph have paid; I know that there is a price I have paid to belong in Canada, the land that received me six years ago (Salegio, 1994, p. 2-4).

My Worries

I have lived in a state of continual worry since the late 1980s. Mine is not, however, like those malaises that Charles Taylor (1991) described in our contemporary culture. Let's see what kind of worries I wrote about.

4/21/1995: Designing a Book

LOST AMONG THE DIVERSITY (tentative title)

It is indubitable that Canada is a multiracial-multiethnic reality. Here people from different countries live, speak many languages, profess a variety of religions, and practice multiple customs. People immigrate to Canada for different reasons. They experience traumas and difficulties that constitute an unlimited subject for observation and study. Among this Canadian diversity are the three generations of Latin Americans who face their own conflicts. One of their struggles is the loss of their identity. It is possible to explore inside Latin Americans in order to understand their emotions, thoughts, and feelings about the "Genesis" of their adventures,

leaving their native countries and coming to Canada, and about their dream of "Return."

The "Genesis" might include sections such as "Chaos," about the previous situation in their native countries that provoked them to leave. "Exodus," would refer to the painful leaving and the gestation of the hope of returning soon. Another section could be "From the First Days to the Last Years," which includes the initial painful cultural shock and maladjustment until the current hard reality that mummified their dream to return. Then, the section "Living with Packed Suitcases" might reveal the eternal conflict of the first generation of Latin American immigrants. In the meantime, the second generation will shout its own grievous duality, "I Do Not Belong to Here; I Am Not From There!" They were young children when they arrived in Canada. They learned one or both official Canadian languages; moreover, they assimilated the Canadian style of life. Despite these advantages, this second generation lives in a permanent crisis of identity.

"The Return" would be composed of sections such as "The Irreversible Change of Everything." Their native countries and their people have changed in many aspects; relatives and friends are not the same as they were before leaving. "The Hidden Change" alludes to the internal, deep, radical change of the first generation of Latin American immigrants. After a while they arrive at the conclusion that the external reality in their native country has changed. However, they strongly reject the simple reference to their own personal, profound changes. "'D' Day" is about the day of the anxiously dreamed return. Next will be "The Visit," which refers to the emotions, thoughts, and feelings of the first return to the beloved native country.

The 'return' becomes a 'visit' because of the conflict of dreams with reality. The next section, "Travelling," shows the evolution of the obsessive return. The immigrant tries to rationalize why he or she does not return immediately; however, the painful frustration still exists, and it will be in the immigrant's heart and mind for a long time, or forever. So the return is substituted by continued trips to visit 'there.'

The following section is "My Anchors"; the anchors are the roots that the second generation has procreated. Those who belong to this generation rarely try to return because of these deep roots. They are part of a hard and concrete reality that imposes on the idealized, uncertain 'over there.' Finally, in the section "Descendants," the grandchildren of the first generation ask their young parents about their origin and ancestors. But their parents are not able to respond because they do not know the exact answers. Their grandparents instead answer their questions by telling stories about an ancient, wonderful land (Salegio, 1995).

People live worrying about the loss of individualism that for many people is "the finest achievement of civilization" (Taylor, 1991, p. 2).

The Freedom to Be Myself

> For me, the freedom to be myself depends directly on the freedom of those who live deprived of many dimensions of freedom: freedom to have the basics as human beings—food, clothes, medicine, housing, and more; freedom to enjoy cultural and spiritual advantages; freedom to have a job, stability in their work place, and benefits.
>
> The desire to fight for the highest and most noble purpose—socialism. The struggles to achieve that purpose had a high cost: life, persecution, prison, and more. That sense of individual sacrifice in favour of the general interest of the deprived sectors of society is further different from the "loss of a heroic dimension to life" (Taylor, 1991, p. 4). Nevertheless, since the 1980s that will to fight has been diminishing, eroding, and supplanting. This deterioration was perceived first among the leadership of those years regarding insurgent organizations. After a while, as a result of the crippling of leaders and the increasing offensive of US imperialism and the regional and local right-wing organizations, people lost their confidence. Hence, frustration, pessimism, and cynicism diminished the sense of fight, to the point that "people no longer have a sense of something worth dying for" (p. 4).
>
> In the current times of the predominance of regressive right-wing organizations, idealism increases considerably, spreading pessimism and resignation to the possibilities of revolution. Poststructuralism, for instance, suggests that "no longer could it be said that the working class is the standard-bearer of freedom, the living negation of domination, the progressive side in contemporary class struggles that would surely end in an utopian community" (Poster, 1990, p. 2). Hence, in the intentional process of denying the possibilities of fighting, "both the working class and the bourgeois began to disappear from history" (p. 2).

"Lived experiences can be discovered, expressed and interpreted" (Miller 1990; as cited in Pinar, 1995, p. 524), and in this process spaces might be created, That is my intention when I write these letters to some friends, former prisoners who are still prisoners of those traumatic lived experiences. I want them to reflect and liberate themselves from that past that hurts.

2003

Letter to Former Political Prisoners

There are two moments in the life of a prisoner.

The first is the struggle to save his/her life. In this moment it is uncertain if the prisoner will be transferred to a judge or court—and even that is bullshit. Struggle for life because to continue in the world of the alive it depends on the torturers—lovers of death—and other factors.

The second is the struggle for freedom, when one is among the alive who inhabit the cells. The inmate's name is included on a list at the penitentiary. This is when the 'inside' and the 'outside' are continually fighting amongst themselves. We want to leave! The outside obsesses us, and we attach ourselves to this dream. And every morning when we awaken there inside, we blame the world and insult everybody.

"Don't be worried, *compadre*," a prisoner told me one day,
"One day we will leave this shit!"

And it is true, one day we leave.
And we leave cursing because 'nobody helped us.'
And we do not have eyes to see how the blue of the sea and sky kiss each other on the 'outside' that is!
We still see the black and gray from the 'inside'—that was.

We do not have ears to listen to the birds' singing and the music in the things from the 'outside' that is!
We are still listening to the noisy keys, lockers, and bars from the 'inside'—that was!

And we are unable to perceive the smell of flowers and wet ground from the 'outside' that is!
We still smell the shit and stink from the 'inside'—that was.

And we do not enjoy the feeling of the dimension of things from the 'outside' The freedom that is!
And we are still reviving in our skin the cold of the bars, the floor, and hallways from the 'inside'—that was.

Even our taste buds do not recognize the flavour of liberty—that is!
And they still are saturated with the decay and corrupted by the 'inside'—that was.

Those are our senses.

Even more,
Our heart does not jump in joyfulness each morning in the 'outside' that we now have!

And more,
Our soul is not thankful for having a body.

And even more,
Our thinking resists differentiating past, present, and future
and establishing their mutual relation.

As a result, we fight with everybody,
and we leave in peace the true enemy.
And we stop loving those who deserve to be loved forever.

And then we are going here, there, over there, and further
as an outcast from the prison.
The enemy did not kill us, but it won anyway:
Deprived us of our receptive ear and of our arm
to continue the struggle!

The Self Does Not Exist in Isolation

The Self exists among contexts and triggering other contexts, or maybe we are as "a colony of Possible Selves" (Bruner, 1990, p. 100)? It is a "transactional relationship between a speaker and the other" (Bruner, 1990, p. 101) where one's consciousness, position, identity, and commitment are framed (Bruner, 1990, p. 101). In the distributive sense, then, the Self can be seen as a product of the situations in which it operates, the "swarms of its participants" as Perkins said (as cited in Bruner, 1990, p. 109) put it.

Marcos: No es lo mismo planificar y programar en momentos de lucidez	Marcos: It is not the same to plan and program in moments of clarity
y raciocinio, que cuando llegan las nubes negras de la incertidumbre, de la tristeza, del temor a la soledad.	and reason, as when the black clouds of uncertainty, of sadness, and of fear of solitude arrive.
. . .	. . .
¡Aunque!	But

Mañana vendrá la primavera
y olvidaré que hiciste
más invierno el invierno
más helados sus fríos
más tristes mis ventanas

tomorrow the spring will come
and I will forget that you made
more winter the winter,
the cold more icy,
my windows more sad. (Salegio, 1983, p. 83)

Closing

Reliving these insurgent memories not only helps me to avoid amnesia, but also strengthens my diverse abilities to face the current reality in the world. In the following chapters, I change focus. In the preceding chapters I have outlined autobiographically my journey into my contemporary situation, which includes joining the bands of the new 'homeless', that is, the hundreds and thousands, even millions, of people who live in the midst of three defining tensions: loss of home, experience of strangeness and estrangement in a new land, and dreams of a new world where a new sense of 'home' might be found.

My experience in Canada has enabled me to study my El Salvador experience more objectively as part of a broader context of the process of capitalism, globalization and imperialism. For the rest of the thesis, I will: a) expand on this context as a prelude for b) outlining my visions of resistance and pedagogical responsibility in a shared future world.

CHAPTER SIX:

THE CONTEMPORARY SITUATION: CAPITALISM, GLOBALIZATION, IMPERIALISM AND RESISTANCE

Capitalism

How far capitalism has gone from the original accumulation of capital through the pillage of America by the Spaniards! "We Spanish suffer from a sickness of the heart for which gold is the only cure" (Hernán Cortés; as cited in Michel Beaud, 2001, p.15). According to Beaud the pillage began in 1503 with the first shipment of precious metal from the Antilles, the treasure of the Aztecs in Mexico in 1519, and the pillage of the Incas in 1534 (p. 15). There are still conflicts that are class struggles, where the protagonists are peasants, coca workers, sectors of the middle class, environmental organizations, gender groups, antiwar protesters, and so on. There is continual debate on how wealth is produced. Does this mean that social relations are no longer relations of exploitation and oppression? How are the countries of the Third World paying installments on the external debt? How are these millions of dollars generated? The conception of the working class as the prime force in emancipation is the subject of continuous debate.

This "postindustrial capitalism relies on the advances and potential of science and technology; by orienting research and development toward the invention of future needs and forms of consumption, it may be called a 'technoscientistic' capitalism" (Beaud, 2001, p. 303). And again technoscience's submission to "huge capitalist corporations" that use it for "their own ends" (p. 303) is confirmed. Thus "the effects of scientific knowledge are visible in every economic sector": agriculture, transportation, and tertiary sectors such as "health, culture, leisure and administration" (p. 303). However, in spite of its complexities, "technoscientistic capitalism" remains dominated by "the search for

a profit which will assure the enlarged reproduction of capital" (p. 303). Hence "the new productive process, and the new technological competition within which it takes place, require ever greater investment toward research, equipment and training" (p. 303). It is no surprise that "in each strategic sector a small number of corporations dominate" (p. 304).

"Industrial capitalism has not disappeared with technoscientific capitalism's rise" (Beaud, 2001, p. 306), and the final purpose of capitalism remains:

> The specific character of capitalism lies in the fact that the surplus acquired through production and trade is applied to expanding the means of production and trade in order to extract an additional surplus. Production or trade for profit; profit from accumulation; accumulation for new production or new trade. . . as well as increased profit. This is the continuous progression at the heart of all capitalist reality. In a word: the search for profit as a way to expand the field of profitable activity. (p. 308)

Now, the present technological revolution exists with two main fields: informatics and genetics. These "seem to allow, at the same time, saving direct work and installations (at least on the total volume of the investments) but they require other divisions of the total work employed, more favourable to qualified work" (Amin, S, 2002, p. 4). With the current technological revolution it is possible to produce more wealth with less work (p.4).

In the world of real capitalism, work is used for the capital that dominates it because it generates profit. However, "excluding from work an increasing number of potential workers (and depriving them, in consequence, of any profit) condemns the productive system to contract itself in absolute terms" (Amin, S, 2002, p. 5). In other words, the current expansion of capital requires a massive marginalization of dramatic levels. Some current discourses

> pretend that capitalism no longer exists or that in any case, the objective demands of the new technology would transform its reality until dissolving the fundamental character, based on the vertical hierarchy, that assures the dominion of the capital upon the work (Amin, S, 2002, p. 5).

This, according to Amin (2002), is the "expression of a 'technical illusion' " (p. 5)—an illusion that the ideology of the system has always used to avoid the question, "Who controls the use of technology?" (p. 5).

The so-called diffusion of capital ownership through open participation in the stock exchange and retirement funds can be called "popular capitalism" or "patrimony accumulation" (Amin, 2002, p. 5).

Another argument of Amin (2002) is that science has converted into a "determinant factor of production, but the social relations (capital and work). . . and knowledge and understanding do not have the same status in the organization of production" (p. 6). For a very long time production has needed both knowledge and understanding. Again, "Who is behind the social relations?" Who owns the land, the factory, the machines? "Who controls the necessary knowledge for production?" (p. 6).

Capitalism is essentially imperialistic, and has been from the earliest days of its world expansion:

> Capitalism is not only a mode of production, but also a world system founded upon the general dominion of this model. This vocation of conquest capitalism has expressed, constantly, since its beginning. Nevertheless, in its world expansion, capitalism has built, reproduced and deepened without interruption an asymmetry between its centres of conquest and the dominated peripheries. That is why we have defined capitalism as a natural imperialist system, or, as we have written, imperialism represents the "permanent phase" of capitalism. (Amin, 2002, p. 9)

There has been the generalized idea that capitalism would represent an unprecedented horizon and that everything concerning the future would fall within the fundamental principles that determine its reproduction, and, even further, that capitalism would have an amazing flexibility to allow adaptation "to all transformations, absorbing and subjecting them to the requirements of the fundamental logic that defines it" (Amin, 2002, p. 1).

To consider the word *capitalism* as "irreplaceable" (Beaud, 2001, p. 5) becomes irrelevant. What is really important is that where capitalism reigns,

there is no room for justice. As Hythloday stated in Tomas More's "Utopia" in 1516:

> But, Master, to speak plainly what is in my mind, as long as there is private property and while money is the standard of all things, I do not think that a nation can be governed either justly or happily... (Beaud, 2001, p. 19)

Globalization

> The coincidence is striking: the principles of political freedom were expressed at practically the same time as was the necessity for economic liberalism. The bourgeoisie, having become strong enough to defy absolutism, needed to legitimate the newly established form of government. And in the same movement, certain members of the bourgeoisie saw that they would find in free trade the stimulus for a new expansion of commerce and production. (Beaud, 2001, p. 35)

The origin of neoliberalism can be found at the end of Second War World, and its ideological hegemony is in Friedrich Hayek's (1944) book: *The Road to Serfdom* (*Camino de servidumbre).* Hayek maintained that the intervention of the State in economic relations is dangerous (Alfonso & Cedeño, 2004, p. 1): "To decentralize power is to reduce the absolute amount of power, and the competitive system is the only system designed to minimize the power exercised by man over man" (Hayek, 1944, p.2). This was not only a political and ideological reaction against the incoming Welfare State, but a strong defence of liberalism: "Our generation has forgotten that the system of private property is the most important guaranty of freedom" (p.2), taking a clear antisocialist position: "... in a country where the sole employer is the state, opposition means death by slow starvation" (p.2). Furthermore, Hayek defends individualism against socialism and "all other forms of totalitarianism" (p.2), and even more, he links his position with religion: individualism "based on the respect of Christianity for the individual man and the belief that it is desirable that men should be free to develop their own individual gifts and bents" (p.2). Clearly this

is a chant to liberalism "No sensible person should have doubted that the economic principles of the 19th century-were only a beginning - that there were immense possibilities of advancement on the lines on which we had moved" (p.3), but the "abandonment of liberalism" (p.3) is blamed on socialism or other ways of "organization" or "planning" (p.3). And even more emphatic, Hayek states

> What is promised to us as the Road to Freedom is in fact the Highroad to Servitude. For it is not difficult to see what must be the consequences when democracy embarks upon a course of planning. The goal of the planning will be described by some such vague term as "the general welfare" (p. 5).

According to Hayek (1944), Socialism promotes "equalitarianism, loss of economic and political freedom of citizens, and destroys competition, that vital mechanism for the prosperity of everybody, because inequality is indispensable for the development of the system" (Carmona 2003, p. 2). Neoliberalism sustains competition as a value not only to cement business and nations, "but also between persons whose value is limited by their capacity to generate incomes, to their success in the market" (p. 2).

Business journalists have described the major expansion and conquest of markets by the multinationals as "globalization." They have talked "about international capitalist expansion without having to deal with its origin, power relations and exploitative outcomes" (Petras, 1998, p. 2). Thus, academics have linked this concept to the equally fabricated concept of the "Third Technological Revolution" and endorsed this recycling result with a "historical inevitability and degree of interdependence that was remote from reality" (p. 2). Businesspeople, journalists, bourgeois academics, and even the Leftist intelligentsia have touted globalization as a "universal category of analysis, through which the imperial ruling classes exercise power and paralyse mass popular opposition" (p. 2).

The ascendancy of imperialism cannot be attributed to the single factor of the "technological revolution," but rather to the interrelationship between

"imperial power, globalist ideology and revolutionary socialist politics" (Petras, 1999, p. 2). This means that the "ascendancy of imperialism is directly related to the circulation of the globaloney discourse and the eclipse of the revolutionary paradigm" (p. 2). In summary, the retreat of Leftist intellectuals and the confusion of popular movements were favourable factors in the "strengthening of the imperial ruling classes. The objective shifts in power resulting from political and economical success were amplified by the ideological capitulation of the ex-Leftist intellectuals and the confusion sown in the popular movement" (p. 2).

Globalization, the latest form of imperialist capitalism, has been imposed worldwide at a high speed. Nevertheless, globalization has been cyclical in world historical development, according to Petras (1999, p. 1), who added that globalization

> involves the creation of a world economy that is not merely the sum of its national economies, but rather a powerful independent reality, created by the international division of labour, and the world market which in the present epoch predominates over national markets. Large scale, long term flows of capital, commodities, technology and labour across national boundaries define the process of globalization. (p. 1)

Periods of high globalization, moments of crises, and periods in which economic flow turned inward reject one of the ideological claims of promoters of globalization. However, there is no "universal, inevitable tendency toward globalization" (p. 1). In fact, through history there have been many factors that have affected the trajectory of globalist nations and classes: interimperial wars, internal crises of overproduction, and social revolutions, for instance.

Contemporary globalization keeps many of the frames of previous phases of globalization: "The driving forces are centred in the imperial state and the multi-national corporation and banks, backed by the international financial institutions" (Petras, 1999, p. 1). The differences are "the scale, scope and speed of the circulation of capital and commodities, particularly financial flows between deregulated economies" (p. 1). Technological changes, mainly in the area of communications, have "been a prime factor in shaping the high velocity of

movements of capital" (p. 1). However, the scope and scale of capital and commodities respond more to political than to technological changes:

> The demise of socialism in Europe and Asia, the conversion of nationalist-populist third-world regimes to unregulated capital and the demise of the welfare state in the West have opened vast areas for accumulation of profits (and surplus capital) and new markets for sales and investment. (p. 1)

The truth is that most of the new technologies "emerged before the current globalist phase and are compatible with expanding domestic production and popular consumption" (p. 2).

The basic ideas of neoliberalism are natural order, homo economicus, economic egotism, commercial community, and perfect competency (Alfonso & Cedeño, 2004, p. 1). From these ideas are derived three concepts: (a) deregulation, which means that a government is limited and restrained from assuring the basic functions of the organization of society; (b) privatization, and (c) free trade (p. 1).

The examination of globalization must be integral. We have to note the economical aspects of globalization (in other words, globalization as an economical phenomenon), and we must locate its substantive policies as hegemonic power and ideological manipulation. The dominant ideas are the powerful omnipotence of Market as God. Market freely expands with no limit to human production and consumption, transnational corporations are permanently merging, and there is the business conception of everything, such as health and education.

Globalization revives 19th-century economic liberalism, whose main lines are privatization, clearing the deficit and the debt, tax cutting, and concessions to foreign investments. Privatization includes the social network, such as social services, pensions, health care, education, prison/reformatories, the selling of state goods, (communications, telephone, postal service, etc.), water, power,

gas, parks, and so on. Clearing the fiscal deficit implies mainly cutting employees by firing or forcing early retirements.

Cutting taxes generally means subsidizing corporations and decreasing taxes for the wealthy and increasing taxes for the middle social sectors. Concessions to foreign investment may be expressed by designating the physical portion of territory as *free zones* where foreign investors may find cheap labour, nonprotection regulations, and free importation of raw materials, as well as free exportation of the produced goods.

Neoliberal globalization takes advantage of the different levels of global salaries and of the society-wide division of labour. Workers do not produce commodities primarily for personal and/or family use; they do so for the use of others in society. Thus in the 21st century the scope of social production is global (Au, 2003, p. 6). Furthermore, the main motivation that drives the working class to sell its labour power to the capitalist class is survival. In the current unfolding of global capitalism among the world proletariat, this motivation is still evident. Finally, the fundamental contradiction driving capitalism is still there in neoliberal globalization: "The working class produces surplus value socially which the capitalist class then appropriates (Socialized production vs. Private appropriation)" (p. 6). Cole (2003) argues:

> Markets are the domain in which surplus value is realized as profits, but it is within the production process itself where surplus value is produced, and there will be attempts to increase the 'rate of exploitation' within this process: to widen the gap between the product of labour power and the consumption of labourers. (p. 3)

GLobalization is the latest form of imperial capitalism that is saturating the world with free circulation of financial, commercial, and productive capital. But globalization also allows raw materials to be obtained from any part of the world and products to be manufactured and distributed worldwide. This is why globalization is borderless.

The New Imperialism

The "new imperialism" can be understood if we briefly refer to the changes that US imperialism has been experiencing in the last 30 years. The "humanitarian face" of imperialism appeared with Jimmy Carter's administration. US-backed dictators were overthrown by popular insurgencies in Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and Iran. New revolutionary, popular, and progressive regimes were established in Afghanistan, Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau. The Carter administration drove the counterrevolutionary military offensive and human rights rhetoric (Petras, 2001c, p. 1). Thus, the "good" Carter armed "Savimbi in Angola, the Contras in Nicaragua, Renimo in Mozambique, and the tribal warlords in Afghanistan" (p.1). Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's National Security Advisor, confirmed that "the US military intervention began six months before the Soviet entry in Afghanistan and was designated to weaken the Kabul regime and force it to collapse for Soviet ground troops" (p. 2). The "progressive intellectuals supported or silenced their voice. They supported another crime of imperialism" (p. 2). Thousands and thousands of fundamentalist volunteers from the Arab world participated. "They destroyed mixed gender schools, secular institutions, and slit the throats of hundreds of women teaching in rural schools and the peasant recipients of the secular's government's land reform program" (p. 1). The Machiavellian plan of the imperialist succeeded: "The US sponsored reactionary uprising of tribal warlords and the mercenaries forced the secular leftist regime in Kabul to appeal to the USSR to provide military aid and soldiers" (p. 1).

The "fighters of liberty" raped working women and forced female doctors and teachers to leave the countryside and wear the *burkha*. Where were the Western feminist organizations? Why did the feminist, Marxist leaders not denounce this? Instead, they joined the "anti-Soviet chorus." Similarly, the Left sects of Trotskyism, Maoism, and anarchism added their anti-Soviet rhetoric (Petras, 2001c, p. 2). This myopia of Western Leftist intellectuals contributed to

"the process of undermining the whole notion of imperialism as the main defining nature of the US state" (p. 2).

Consequently, it is not a coincidence that the "new thinking"—from the 1980s—began to consider imperialism as "a simple policy, not as a structure of power and economic expansion" (Petras, 2001c, p. 2). Thus those who stood as anti-imperialists were labelled "anti-American" and "orthodox Marxists" (p. 2).

Then there are the never-paid-for crimes against the people of Nicaragua, crimes initiated by Carter and expanded and deepened by Reagan. In October 1983 Reagan invaded Grenada pretexting "to avoid another Cuba and Soviet penetration". George Bush senior made his own "contribution: The president of Panama, Manuel Noriega, a CIA man, left his post and fell in disgrace; he was despised as a "narcodictator." Panama was invaded, its people massacred, and Noriega is still in the prison of the invaders. Saddam Hussein, another man used by the United States (against Iran), fell in disgrace, and propaganda converted him into a "new Hitler" (the demonization of Saddam Hussein) (Petras, 2001c, p. 2). Unfortunately, this "humanitarian imperialism" finds sufficient naïveté among American citizens, Western academia, and even Leftist intellectuals, and we have heard the singular-equation position condemning the invading US forces as well as "the dictator." The first aggression was in 1991 (the so-called Gulf War). The mass killing of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, the economic blockade, the bombing, the death of 500,000 infants do not count?

Self-determination is a fundamental principle, and the argument of the dictatorial ruler is simply a vulgar pretext. Only ignorance, naïveté, and amnesia can make one believe that US imperialists worry about the repression and oppression exercised by dictators and tyrants. "Evasion and moral decay" are present, with the support of the "theory of the double demon" (Petras, 2001c, p. 2).

In 1991 Iraq was a test for the use of massive military power, and then in 1999 the US–NATO bombing and invasion of Yugoslavia. Interethnic conflicts, agitation of separatist leaders, "and encourage[ment] by NATO powers were

used as pretext for imperial intervention" (the US sided with the Bosnian Muslims in Sarajevo and the Croatian profascists, Germany supported the Slovenians, and the Albanian regime backed a sector of annexionist Albanian Kosovars), "all of them against the Serb-led multi ethnic Yugoslav Republic" (Petras, 2001c, p. 3). The imperialist machinery of propaganda charged Milosevic and his forces with atrocities. Hence this other "humanitarian war" is to protect the Albanians in Kosovo, whereas before, the "protected" were the Bosnian Muslims. There were massive bombings of civilian targets in Belgrade, Kosovo, and everywhere: "hospitals, factories, bridges, passenger trains, radio and TV stations" (p. 4).

During the 1990s there were relative weaknesses in the economical and political power of the United States in strategic areas of the world (Middle East, Latin America, Asia, and Europe), and the increased influence of the US in the Balkans was less significant (Kosovo, Macedonia, and Serbia) (Petras, 2004c, p. 25). Nevertheless, the presence there challenged the influence and interests of United Europe. It developed a "great expansion of the economical interests of the United States through its corporations and multinational banks in the Third World, and the gradual weaknesses of the client regimes that support that expansion" (p. 25).

The indirect control of imperialism over the poor and pillaged states of the Third World became obsolete; the international financial institutions [IFIs) were no longer efficient. Thus, a "new Imperialism" was required—imperial wars that will be followed by military conquest and occupation of territories. "The 'recolonization,' " Petras (2004c) contended, "is the 'new imperialism,' a process that is already being developed in the air, land and sea of Latin America" (p. 25).

The decrease in the US's influence was evident in the Middle East. Iran and Iraq survived imperialist isolation and aggression; they broke the embargo. Iran broke the sanctions that the US had imposed and was accepted in the OPEC. Iraq also was integrated into the OPEC, the Arab league, and so on. Libya reestablished relations with the EU. The Palestinians had unanimous support from the Arabic world (even the clients of the United States). "Evidently, the

'new world order' of Bush senior was in ruins, reduced to minifeuds, in the back yard, in the Albanian provinces in the Balkans, infected by the mafia" (Petras, 2004c, p. 26).

In addition, there were huge increases in the massive commercial surplus accumulated in Asia and EU at a cost to the US (in 2000 the US's commercial deficit was $450 thousand million). In Latin America the European multinational corporations - especially those from Spain - defeated their US rivals for profitable, privatized business (Petras, 2004c, pp. 26-27). Politically, there were also challenges to the United States' domination: Colombian guerrillas; President Chavez from Venezuela; mass movements in Ecuador, Brazil, and other countries; the collapse of the Argentine economy, and so on (p. 27). Furthermore, antiglobalization movements, increasing in West Europe, United States, and Canada, challenged the imposition of rules by Washington that were favourable to itself.

As a result, the US began the militarization of its foreign policy (Plan Colombia) and made unilateral decisions against: SALT II with Russia, the Kyoto Protocol, the International Tribunal of Human Rights, agreements against the biological war and against the use of land mines, and so forth. Unilateral actions have combined regional-military action and economical pressure (Free Trade for the Americas). This agreement has been conceived to decrease European competition and to increase US dominance. The imposition of this annexionist project has faced consistent opposition from Brazil, Venezuela, and Argentina (Petras, 2004c, p. 27).

Before September 11, 2001, the weakness of the ability of the United States to defend its symbols of finance and military within the empire had already been manifested: USS Cole was attacked in Yemen, embassies in Kenyan and Tanzania, and previous attacks against the World Trade Center (Petras, 2004c, p. 27).

Before September 11, the Bush administration had been facing diplomatic difficulties: reluctance with regard to its proposal of shield missiles, the rejection

of its unilateral decisions. September 11 was the golden gift that allowed the administration to explode its imperial military counteroffensive.

In spite of manipulation by the Bush administration and the corporate media, September 11 does not mean a new historical era. Before that date there were imperial military aggressions and popular liberation fights worldwide. That date is only relevant because it marks a counteroffensive to fix the weakness and rebuild the dreamed "new world order" centred in the United States.

The bipolar world of the Cold War created an obstacle to the expansion of this ideological frame and economical system. "The socialist world falls down, the Soviet Union disintegrates and United States becomes the only superpower within a unipolar world, without opposition in the political, economical, military, technological and cultural spheres" (Castro, 1999, p. 5).

Since then, warrior and ultranationalist theories have spread, the theoretical discussion has focused on the "necessity of building hegemonic power," and globalization has been interpreted as "a devastator, inevitable and manifested destiny" and not as "a specific period of a unipolar imperialistic system" (Carmona, 2003, p. 2). Then it became a "post society where the traditional social problematics and contradictions had been overcome" (p. 2). And we witnessed a "new society" based on "informatics" or "postindustrialism". Accordingly, new thematic priorities and categories were created, and those who did not follow this frame were *retardatarios*, *retrogrades*, *pre*. Then, "From a real transformation of the productive forces (mainly communications and the speed of the flux of capital), it was pretended to derivate a global transformation of society within a mechanistic view presented as a great theoretical revelation" (p. 2).

The 21st century brought new challenges to the hegemony of the United States. Ideologists reevaluated the political and military conceptions of the 1990s, developed new theories, discarded the "multilateralism" and called for a more obvious military domination. After September 2001 ultrareactionary, retrograde, and violent dominant sectors of the United States colluded to

formulate the Bush Doctrine (preventive wars), which even includes restricting the democratic rights of US citizens. Violence against foreign countries is, however, the critical emphasis of this doctrine. The three fundamental components of the doctrine are the conception of a supremacist US, a firm entrenchement of power, and religious fundamentalism (Carmona, 2003, p. 3). These three pillars are interrelated to foster a totalitarian argument that justifies US wars of pillage, occupation, and barbarianism (p. 3).

In mid February 2002, the Institute for American Values—an organization committed to reestablishing moral, traditional family, and marriage values—published a letter entitled *"What We're Fighting For"* signed by a group of intellectuals, including Samuel Huntington and Francis Fukuyama, who tried to morally justify the war against Afghanistan. It is based on the following principles applicable to all human beings:

1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
2. The basic subject of society is the human person, and the legitimate role of government is to protect and help to foster the conditions for human flourishing.
3. Human beings naturally desire to seek the truth about life's purpose and ultimate ends.
4. Freedom of conscience and religion are inviolable rights of the human person.
5. Killing in the name of God is contrary to faith in God and is the greatest betrayal of the universality of religious faith.

We fight to defend ourselves and to defend these universal principles (Institute for American Values, 2002, p. 1).

In other words, human values have universal validity, but the United States is the one that incarnates them the best. Thus, the moral, social, political, and economical superiority of the United States in the world has been declared, and it is desirable that others emulate its institutions. The United States is the "natural judge," the gendarme able to use force to "defend" such dignity. From here the authors of the letter "transfer the supposed characteristics of the social institutions to the regime" (Carmona, 2003, p.4): "Clearly then, our attackers

despise not just our government, but our overall society, our entire way of living. Fundamentally, their grievance concerns not only what our leaders do, but also *who we are"* (Institute for American Values, 2002, p. 3, as cited by Carmona, 2003, p.4). The letter refers to the words of bin Laden who describes the "blessed strikes" of September 11, 2001 against United States "the head of world of infidelity" (Institute for American Values, 2002, p. 2).

Now the US government has the "superiority" to accuse those who oppose government policies of "anti-Americanism" (Carmona, 2003, p. 4). The US is far from being a homogeneous society, without conflicts between groups and classes. Worse, "the current administration achieved power even though losing the elections" (p. 4).

After explaining that "human beings are by nature 'religious' ", and that "across the world, religious faith and religious institutions are important bases of civil society" (Institute for American Values, 2002, p 5) the letter states "the legitimacy of the State derives from its relation with religion" (Carmona, 2003, p, 5).

> As its best, the United States seeks to be a society in which faith and freedom can go together, each elevating the other. We have a secular state - our government officials are not simultaneously religious officials - but we are by far the western world's most religious society (Institute for American Values, 2002, p 5).

The letter claims that Jews, Christians, Muslims, and others are people of faith committed "to love mercy and to do all in our power to prevent war and live in peace" (p. 6). However there are times of just war:

> ...When the first and most important reply to the evil is to stop it. There are times when waging war is not only morally permitted, but also morally necessary, as a response to calamitous acts of violence, hatred and injustice. This is one of those times (Institute for American Values, 2002, p 6).

Thus the "just war" is a matter of morality rather than politics: the fight against evil. And this "enemy is not only bad, but violent, unjust and attacks

first" (Carmona, 2003, p.5). With this "logic" "the invader converts its victims into aggressors, and, even worse, demonizes them (p. 5).

The letter stresses the "defensive" character of the fairness of the war that is crucial to win it. In fact, "we fight to defend ourselves, but we also believe that we fight to defend those universal principles of human rights and human dignity that are the best scope for humankind" (Institute for American Values, 2002, p 10).

It is easy then to apply these "principles": Iraq is part of the axis of evil, there is "proof" that it has weapons of mass destruction that will hurt innocent people, and therefore a preventive war against Iraq is justified! In summary, the letter could be written like this:

> They attack us because they hate us, they hate us because we are good and because we live according to the fundamental moral truth; consequently our enemy is evil and must be stopped by the force of weapons. The war must be absolute because the evil does not admit other treatment, we cannot make concessions, there cannot be pacts, it only is possible to exterminate it. Only in this way United States can save the world! (Carmona 2003,p. 6)

It is important to realize how religion has been presented in the idiosyncrasy, culture and institutions molding "the collective sense of values and patterns of thinking" of Americans. (Mack, 1995, p.2). The Bible shaped the way to view the land and how to treat Native Americans, affected the construction of their institutions including schools, universities and curricula (p.2). With the Bible "segregation in the South was long justified" and when the time came to take the lands of the West, many Americans felt themselves "as the people of God, called to create a paradise" (pp. 2-3). There are more clichés taken from "biblical imagery; 'righteous nation', 'city set on a hill,' and 'light to the nations' " (p.3). There is then no surprise that "the New Testament is commonly viewed and treated as a charter document that came into being much like the Constitution of the United States" (p. 5). "The Bible has patterned American thought, practice and policy" (p. 304).

We refer to American mentality, values, social practices, attitudes, foreign policies, entertainment, and popular novels. And we all know about the America dream. The important thing to notice is that scholars have been able to show how closely these expressions of a common culture correspond to features of the Christian myth. (pp. 303-304)

It is within the United States that the ethical justification of USA's aggressions finds support among the naïve; there the "fundamental truth" and the demonization of the "enemy" makes followers blind to genocide. After 1975, did the administrations of USA continue framing their imperialist genocides with "biblical epic" (P. 306) like in Vietnam: "Destroying them in order to save them"? (p. 307). Yes, they did and also justifying their crimes with fundamentalist "Christian" myths: The current administration of the United States sustains that "to spread freedom and democracy through the world", especially in "the Middle East" (McGivering, 2005, pp. 2-3) is "*the great mission of American diplomacy*" says Condolezza Rice (as cited by McGivering , 2005, p.3, emphasis is mine).

Also, strong nationalism and a puritan tradition have been present for a long time" in the US (Carmona, 2003, p. 7). The current USA administration not only emphasizes that tradition, but adds the conception of moral supremacy. The result is "a doctrine equivalent to the Arian superiority doctrine of the Nazis" (p. 7).

Even more, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), an organization initiated in 1997 to promote the leadership of the United States, and the American Enterprise Institute, the Hudson Institute, and others have promoted in the US a change in military, nuclear, and geopolitical conceptions. The PNAC established as basic tenets that "the USA leadership is good for America as well as for the world; that said leadership requires military force, diplomatic energy and subjection to a moral principle" (p. 7). Because the emphasis in the promotion of the leadership was on military display, the PNAC called for a large defence budget to deepen the military advantages of the United States (p.7).

Three elements were taken from the Reagan administration: (a) an army force capable of facing present and future challenges, (b) an international politic that promotes American principles, and (c) a leadership that assumes a protagonist role. From here derive the following four goals: (a) increase defence expenses and modernize the armed forces, (b) challenge regimes hostile to the interest of the United States, (c) promote political and economical freedom outside the country, and (d) "accept the responsibility of the unique role of the United States in preserving and extending a friendly foreign order of our security, prosperity and our principles" (Carmona, 2003, p. 8). These four goals have been achieved. Within this vision, the ultrareactionary hawks of the current USA administration have promoted "a preventive and permanent war, the use of low-power nuclear weapons in conventional wars, Star Wars, and the application of a version of the *Blitzkrieg* waged by the Wehrmacht Nazis" (p.8).

Resistance

Multiple Forms of Resistance Around the World

The demands are coming more frequently: Reduce the unfair gap between rich and poor countries; pardon the external debt of poor countries; democratize the organism of the United Nations; and stop World Bank and International Monetary Fund practices such as the dictation of economic policies, the imposition of inhumane strategies of structural adjustment, and the imposition of direct taxes on the majorities and the reduction of taxes on the wealthy and on corporations. There are also attempts to build an international network of unions and associations, nongovernment organizations, and anti-imperialist fronts and coalitions. There are meetings, exchanges, and the coordination of initiatives and proposals to protect the environment, women's rights, children, and ethnical and religious minorities. Klein (2002) gives credit to this mosaic resistance: This "decentralized, multiheaded swarm of a movement has succeeded in educating and radicalizing a generation of activists around the world" (p. 2).

There are also the demands of indigenous people, who, in addition to the general demands against neoliberal projects, have their particular cultural and social demands. On March 30, 2004, more than 40,000 indigenous Guatemalan marched in Guatemala City for the recognition of original languages, education, health, and land reform, and to reject the free trade agreements.

People are also denouncing the damage to the natural environment. Those in the Amazonian region, and people from La Oraya, Peru, are protesting a US foundry that emits harmful fumes. The cause of protecting the environment has been a longstanding part of the class struggle. In essence, capitalism has been destroying the planet. It is not "abuse" of nature; it is oppression and exploitation of nature that can be accomplished only through relationships based on exploitation, monetarism and especially the concept of salary.

For centuries capitalism has been destroying the environment. The environmentalist cause begins when people realize that there has been damage to living beings, damage that could be immediate or middle or long term or that may even be provoked by digging the earth and moving the water; when they realize that everything is ecologically connected.

Moreover, the destruction of the environment has a social connection because there is a social relation of work that provokes violations of the environment. The ambition to trade furs made hunters decimate the bison, for instance. The field of the environment is broad, and sometimes some aspects of environmental damage seem to be independent, but actually are not.

The concept of individual responsibility of citizens is the result of capitalist ideology: Consumerism converts individuals and families into participants in environmental destruction. Capitalists bombard us with publicity and propaganda in order to sell their commodities to "improve our comfort" and to "enhance our lifestyle." So we buy cars, electrical appliances, and toys.

On the first anniversary of the beginning of the genocide in Iraq, millions of people marched worldwide on March 21, 2004, against the aggression and demanded the return of soldiers: in Italy, 2 million pacifists; in Spain, 100,000 in

Madrid and 150,000 in Barcelona; in London, 500,000; 150,000 in Athens; thousands in Paris and Dublin, Ireland; in Germany (Berlin, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Heidelberg, and Ramstein); and hundreds in Poland and in Hungary. There were thousands of protesters in United States, mainly in San Francisco; thousands in Venezuela, Santiago de Chile, and Cuba; and hundreds in Paraguay, Panama, Puerto Rico, and Argentina y Brazil. There were also huge marches in the Middle East, in Asia, and Australia.

The capacity for world coordination or programming is tremendous. The motives are also very important: to protest the unfair war waged by the US in Iraq and to demand the return of soldiers.

There have been modalities of mobilization and resistance in the last 10 years, with new focuses such as feminism, environmentalism, nongovernmental organizations, and indigenes. In spite of their appearance, these modalities are related to class struggle. A key challenge is to develop politics of alliance between these new movements and other social classes and sectors traditionally conceived as revolutionaries in the social and political program: urban workers, farm workers, peasants, students, those in the middle social sectors, and so on.

Resistance Against Free Trade for the Americas (Area de Libre Comercio de las Americas—ALCA)

Great protests happened in year 2004 against the annexionist project of Free Trade for the Americas that the government of USA is obsessively attempting to impose. The US administration has been facing resistance on two levels: (a) the massive protests in Quebec, Quito, Porto Alegre, Buenos Aires, La Paz, and more recently in Cancun and Miami, broke the secrecy and silence of the initial negotiations between the US administrations and governments that had become its accomplices (Pérez Valenzuela, 2004, p. 1); and (b) the various progressive oppositions at the level of the Venezuelan government of Hugo Chávez, who has been very outspoken against the ALCA project. He is inspiring a Bolivarian revolution for political, social, and economical changes. Thus

Venezuela is subject to attacks by US imperialism through any means: politically, diplomatically, economically, and culturally; and if it is still firm, then militarily.

As well, there is Brazil's very cautious position and the irreverent position of the Argentine government.

After the meeting in Buenos Aires it became evident that there was a pause in the negotiations of the ALCA, with problematic aspects for the Mercado Común de Sur América [MERCOSUR], Canada, Mexico, Ecuador, Chile, and Costa Rica: additional dispositions, subsidies to agriculture, services, and intellectual property. The United States remains intransigent in discussing agriculture subsidies and the tactic of the MERCOSUR to delay a decisive commitment. In spite of these varied oppositions, the US's plan to commence ALCA in January 2005 did not change.

The US conceived the alternative of the "light" ALCA in the meeting in Miami in November 2003. This concept means superficial commitments for everybody, without affecting controversial topics, and bilateral agreements. In fact, there has been progress executing or signing the Free Trade Agreements of the United States with Mexico, Chile, Central America, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Panama, Ecuador, and Peru.

Closing

Imperialism is not omnipotent. Its 150,000 troops are suffering defeat in Iraq. The imperial arrogance underestimated the tradition of patriotism among Iraqis. Now there are about 200,000 insurgents including combatants and active supporters. (Reynolds, 2005, p.1). "These figures do not represent an insurgency. They represent a war" (p.1). As in Vietnam, there is an insurgency that is " 'irremediable' and 'ineradicable' by US and other foreign troops alone" says Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the former British representative to the former Coalition Authority, as cited by Reynolds (2005, p.3). The political and military strategy of the USA has been broken by the resistance in Iraq: "We have to find a way to take the offensive against the insurgents. Right now, we are playing

defense. And we are losing" a senior military officer told NEWSWEEK (Hirsh & Barry, 2005, p. 1). The Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld shows the same preoccupation "What everyone is agreeing on is that we can't just go on as we are" (p. 1). So, the aggressors are taking what they call "The Salvador Option" (p. 1), referred to the U.S criminal strategy implemented in the 1970s and 1980s in El Salvador: death squads to hunt and kill thousands of people. Though the strategy did not defeat the insurgency in El Salvador, the Pentagon is still planning to implement it in Iraq. "Special Forces teams to advise, support and possibly train Iraqi squads" (p.2) and the decision makers of the carnage are also deliberating as to who will "take responsibility", the CIA or the Pentagon (p. 2).

In the meantime, in Afghanistan imperialism does not consolidate power; it is incapable of stopping the civil war between tribes, clans, narcodealers, nationalists, and warlords. Imperialism failed in its three attempts in Venezuela: in the coup, the managers' strike, and the referendum. There was defeat in Bolivia in February 2004. Cuba is still resisting all pressures and threats by terrorists and mercenaries (paid agents and/or "dissidents").

The resistance has been creative, opportunistic, varied, coordinated, and organized, not only in pacifist ways, but also in expressions of radicalism. These acts of resistance have contributed to denouncing plans of corporations and client governments.

The new revolutionary organizations today are qualitatively different. The nature of these journeys of fighting against neoliberalism seems to be more anti-imperialist than anticapitalist. However, anticapitalism may be found in the popular struggles in Peru and Bolivia, in the first stages, as well as in the *Movimiento de los Sin Tierra* [MST] in Brazil; nationally as in the Argentinean battle; regionally as in Ecuador, Perú, and Bolivia; and internationally as in Seattle, Quebec, and the protests against war and so on. At the government level, the more persevering have been the Cuban government and, second, the Venezuelan government; and, very cautiously, the Brazilian and Argentinean presidents.

There are contradictions among imperialists and within the capitalist system itself, even though these contradictions, while critical, are not enough to stop the imperial plans. The EU, for instance, does not share the military intentions of the United States against Iran: "In the XXI century the conflicts in the world have to be resolved in the frame of diplomacy and multilateralism" says Jean Asselborn, president in turn of the EU, as cited by EFE (2005, p. 1). "We hope that the United States sees that 2005 is a year for the multilateralism" adds Asselborn (p.1). It seems that the main way to achieve it is through massive, organized, and combative fighting: the globalization of the struggle.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

THE INSURGENT NATURE OF THIS TOPIC

Ya ha sonado la hora postrera del colonialismo y millones de habitantes de Asia, Africa y América Latina se levantan al encuentro de una nueva vida e imponen su irrestricto derecho a la autodeterminación y al desarrollo independiente de sus naciones. (Guevara, 1964, p. 1)

The last hour for colonialism and millions of inhabitants from Asia, Africa, and Latin America stand up to meet a new life and impose their unrestricted right to self-determination and independent development of their nations has sounded.

Introduction

Almost 40 years since that historical speech by Dr. Ernesto Che Guevara (1964) at the United Nations Assembly, a new version of neocolonialism as neoliberal globalization has been imposed worldwide. Millions of people suffer exploitation and oppression and survive in miserable conditions, deprived of food, housing, clothing, health, education, culture, and entertainment. In these times, sovereignty, independence, self-determination, and self-development seem to be more and more violated than ever. In fact, US imperialism, under the Bush administration, has applied a neo-fascist policy to impose a unipolar world under its domain: It wants to own the planet, to invent and make war wherever possible by lying, as Hitler did.

This imperial power has installed military bases in 130 countries worldwide (over 250,000 members of the army). These numbers do not include Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kuwait. To finance this strategy of US military colonization, Bush has asked for a budget without precedent: 488,000 millions of US dollars (more that 20% of what the United States expended during the Cold War). There will be more wars, hiding US casualties, buying of missiles and high

technology, the arms race and the space race, and initiation of the missile defence system (Untoría, 2004, p. 1).

Now, as 40 years ago, the only alternative for the exploited and the oppressed is to fight to defeat imperialism, the "enemy of humanity" (Sandinista anthem). The US is the "perpetrator of exploitation and oppression of the world's people" (Guevara, 1964, p. 11).

To fight against injustice and for freedom is a right. Freedom is a sacred dream that I feel morally obligated to stress in this study. Accordingly, this topic is biased by many insurgent positions. Some people will probably not share this view. I understand this, but I am honestly addressing these 'risky' issues that are making humans less human, making more people poor and the pit of poverty deeper. Conversely, a handful of people are becoming richer and richer. The accumulation of the wealth of some people is in direct relation to the appalling level of indigence of many, many people. They are "those who accumulate with their work the wealth, create values, and propel the wheels of history" (Guevara, 1964, p. 11). Now those people, again, "are wakening from the long alienated sleep in which they were submitted" (p. 11).

Marxism is a method and a theory for action for all times. Marxism is still alive as a theory for interpreting reality and as a guide and method to transform reality (revolution). In spite of the failure of socialism in Eastern Europe, socialism is still the most humanitarian and just alternative to capitalism, including its latest form, neoliberal globalization, imposed by political, economical, and military means.

World imperialism has contradictions which repudiate the univocity -of a global market. I certainly believe that one day the other part of the triad—United Europe and Japan—will no longer endure the abuses, arrogance, and impunity of US imperialism. These contradictions and conflicts are important, but the future of humanity cannot depend on these contradictions. Thus I am intentionally looking for varied ways of resistance and insurgency. I am analyzing them accordingly to see how able they are to defeat neoliberal globalization.

Consequently, the Manifesto, developed later in this thesis, is also clearly insurgent in nature.

Education, Curriculum, Teaching, and Teachers Are Not Neutral in the Human Struggle

Teachers are involved. I want to research the premise that education—as curriculum, teaching, and teachers—may contribute to the favouring of the majority of people, who are the oppressed. In other words, I am pursuing "the role of education as a vehicle for liberatory praxis" (McLaren, 2002, p. 1).

The fundamental role of education in times of historical change must be emphasized. A historical journey might provide evidence of both the rich ability of human beings to engender insurgent dreams and the existence and actions of destroyers of dreams and dreamers, and the role of education within it.

In El Salvador we used to work for a "pedagogical project" in which schools would develop into places where knowledge would become a tool for changing reality. However, it does not occur as a spontaneous act, but "knowledge [is converted] into transformative action" (Boff Leonardo, 1997; as cited in McLaren, 2002, p. 2).

In current times the value of integrity is at risk among teachers. We do not know what to do about technology and neoliberal globalization. We hesitate; must we strictly follow the directions of the masters of the business of education? We doubt that we should jump out of the box—the restraints, the boundaries of curriculum. We simply do not know if we should throw away the tricky concept of "objectivity" and instead orient and guide our students through the labyrinth produced by globalization. If at least we knew that we do not know, perhaps this would be a first stage in regaining our consciousness!

I believe that teachers and their "pedagogical project" will meet socialism on the horizon—a liberationist project to defeat injustice and build a more human

life. I find it worthy to learn from revolutionaries such as Marx and Engels, Lenin, Che Guevara, and Fidel Castro, as well as Paulo Freire, McLaren, and other agents of critical pedagogy who are also revolutionaries of education focused on social revolution.

The Insurgent Nature of This Study

From the bottom of my heart I wish that the oppressed would be able to regain their dreams and nurture their hopes in social liberation. It is imperative to vindicate this possibility. I certainly prefer to "speak the truth," even at risk, rather than to do a "pleasing" project (Oakley, 1984, p. xvii). How do I gather the courage to do so? I think that courage is nourished by unconditional love for others—those majorities who are deprived of the fundamental resources to live as humans.

There is no room for ambiguities in my inclinations, so I stand up for the insurgent character of this project, despite the difficulties. The eventuality of this dissertation's requirements does not allow me the pretext of separating the man, the teacher, the father, the poet, and the scholar from the insurgent, the dreamer, and the builder. The relevance of this dissertation will not be "earned" within me, but within the domains of others.

Thus, there is a revolutionary path to find and follow; there is a pedagogical course of action to reinforce. In the current historical time of global oppression we need Freire and Che (McLaren, 2002, p. 4). There is exploitation, there is repression, and there is oppression within the unipolar/capitalist power and worldwide within the market/labour countries. The persistence and spreading of these social scourges deny the myth of capitalist democracy and the promise of neoliberal heaven. These social shames prompt the need to trigger praxis (every body from its own trench).

I take the fundamental purpose of this study very seriously. It is relevant to me, the inquirer into the field of globalization, for the notion of autobiographical writing, the field of education (curriculum, teaching, and teachers), for insurgent activism, and for society and the broader world.

This topic is important to me because it has to do with my past dreams as an activist, political analyst, and teacher in El Salvador. My role in this research is not just to rescue insurgent dreams, but also to contribute to the current debate on neoliberal globalization and to vitalize the possibilities of education to side with the oppressed. This topic also has to do with my current situation in Canada, my adoptive country. As a result of this research, I may also increase my notions on different kinds of resistance in the latest times.

I will be able to emphasize that neoliberal globalization is hurting people, the environment, and education not only in underdeveloped countries such as El Salvador, but also in developed countries such as Canada. In fact, in both countries there are many similarities in neoliberal globalization's measures as well as in its effects. For instance, public patrimony is being sold, social networks are being cut, and thousands of people have been left with no jobs, and so on. To point out neoliberal globalization's presence and its impact on human beings' lives, environment, and education in a developed country reinforces the understanding that globalization hits not just the "Third World."

In reliving past, insurgent memories I not only revive my memory, but also stress the importance of the notion of autobiographical writing. I display the significance of autobiographical pieces as personal memories.

This research also contributes to the debate on education and curriculum and addresses "risky" aspects such as social class; curriculum and change; technology; and the role of teaching, teachers, and teachers as dreamers and makers of dreams and dreamers.

It seems that past dreams of liberty and justice are being crushed. Some people are losing their memories and do not dream any more. Morale is low. Some people feel ideologically annihilated. Hence, discovering that there are

certainly actions and reactions to resist and defeat neoliberal globalization is another goal.

Furthermore, it is important to locate signs of resistance and insurgency against neoliberal globalization and to determine how education, curriculum, the teaching and learning process, and teachers' roles and positions might contribute to resisting and/or defeating neoliberal globalization. Accordingly, in addition to a summary and conclusions, an insurgent Manifesto has been included. In other words, the cause against neoliberal globalization is reinforced by evidencing actions and reactions of resistance and insurgency in the whole process and is presented at the end through the Manifesto.

The age of neoliberal globalization in which we are living has been conceived as omnipresent and omnipotent. These conditions, however, have been manipulated to engender pessimism and frustration. Hence, in order to confront this kind of globalization, we need to know and study it. There is economical, ecological, political, ideological, and cultural damage inflicted by neoliberal globalization that needs not only to be studied academically, but also to be stopped. Therefore this study contributes to the denunciation and unmasking of neoliberal globalization.

On completing this research, first, I will be able, among other things, to explain clearly what globalization and its world impact are. Second, I will be able to speak about how neoliberal globalization is presenting itself and impacting human lives, the environment, and education in Canada.

Finally, whatever the results, this dissertation will claim, "Yes, it is possible to vindicate what is the right and the ability to dream and to build."

Closing

I am a holistic result—my being. Each part and the totality are present every day and night, every hour, every minute, and every second. I confess my inability to put aside the pieces that compound my being from my academic

urgencies. I confess that I cannot neutralize them from my dissertation. In other words, I declare myself unable to sterilize my dissertation from "high-risk," contagious optimism, enthusiasm, passion, wishes. I am even more apologetic for my inability to avoid inconveniences because of my Marxist position.

CHAPTER EIGHT:
TWO INTERPRETIVE KEYS: HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Historical Materialism

Introduction

Our philosophical points of view are immersed in how we interpret facts, behaviours, and thoughts related to history, politics, and international affairs. Philosophy also drives education and nurtures the orientation or tendency of literature and art. Education and curriculum are not sterile, neutral, or independent; they dictate and respond to history, politics, and international affairs.

How do we see the world, and how do we interpret it? How do we view the outburst of social revolutions in the last two centuries, and how do we decode them? How do we perceive the past, present, and future? Disenchantment and dissolution seem to predominate among people. They look like they have lost their memory about a past full of hopes and dreams.

Finally, how do we see and interpret the present? Pessimism and distortion have displaced critical thinking and categories of analysis that were addressed to a social revolution that would suppress an old class order saturated with injustice and oppression. Those were insurgent dreams because they wanted to subvert the status quo and build a more human society.

For Marxism, the Central Problem Is the Transformation of an Unfair Reality

The discussion of the reality or unreality of thinking, isolated from practice, is purely scholastic (Alonso, 1981, p. 104). Conversely, "the only way to know if human thinking can arrive to the true objective is through practice" (p. 104). It is the "praxis." No longer are humans considered objectors, products of circumstances, because humans "are those who make the circumstances

change" (p. 105). Thus, the remedy is not to create a new theory to substitute or correct the materialist theory, "but to conceive human activity as *revolutionary practice*" (p. 105). Marx (as cited in Alonso, 1981) redefined human essence as the whole of social relations and believed that "social life is practice and so, in the human practice and in the comprehension of this practice is the solution to the mysteries of social life" (p. 106). The central difference between the metaphysical, materialistic, or idealistic method and the dialectical method is that "the first is always contemplative—it does not become practice; while to the dialectic method, the central problem is the transformation of the reality" (Lukács, 1973; as cited in Alonso, 1981, p. 106). Now it is time to reflect on how the unity of theory and practice is possible. Marx explained, "It is not enough that ideas reclaim the reality, also the reality has to tend toward thought" (p. 106).

Marxism Implies a New Conception of Men and History

The materialistic-dialectical conception of history has real premises: "the individuals, their action and material conditions of life, those which have been met already made, as well as those engendered by their own action" (Marx & Engels, 1973, p. 15). The main characteristic that triggers the self-knowledge of what they are is the fact that "men themselves begin to see the difference between themselves and animals as soon as they begin to produce their means to live" (p. 11. Production, specifically the means of production (how to produce), "expresses the nature of men" (Alonso, 1981, p. 108). The level of development of production will affect the individual and international social exchange and the social structure of every country. According to Marx and Engels, every new productive power generates a new development of the division of labour (p. 16).

Relations of Production and Social Being

Against the idealists, Marx did not depart from what men think or imagine, but from their concrete action. This implies Marx's opposition to the inert

materialism that looks upon man only as an object. In other words, for Marx, men "are" what they "do," and it has to do with determined social relations, politics, and the estate, which is not the result of the will of individuals freely associated, but the result of a process of production (Alonso, 1981, p. 108).

Every individual is conditioned by some general factors, products of the historical development that takes the specific form imposed by the class situation.

Totality and Means of Production

The only way to know the facts is within the "context that articulates the individual's facts from the social life in a totality as moments of social development" (Lukács, 1969, p. 10). Thus the means of production is an example of organic totality. Totality is complex and "integrates the processes of production, the reproduction and a determined way to live for individuals" (Alonso, 1981, p. 110).

The condition to "get" the totality of the theoretical system of Marxism "is given by its historical mission," maintained Pla (2003, p. 3). That historical mission "is to become the ideology of the social class," which has the goal to eradicate capitalist exploitation and all systems of social exploitation. "This is a revolutionary ideology, a system of ideas that allows us not only to understand and design revolution" (p. 3), but also develop it. In the current times of neoliberal globalization and conformation of a world-fascist tyranny, for instance, the question arises, "How do we form the idea of the objective need and the real possibility of the communist revolution in the contemporaneous world?" (p. 3).

How Does Each of These Sources of Marxism Contribute to the Totality?

First, *the philosophy of Marxism—materialism*—makes two contributions: (a) the materialist comprehension of history, which allows us to differentiate "the material changes on the economical conditions of production" (Marx & Engels; as cited in Pla, 2003, p. 4); and (b) the dialectical logic, a theoretical tool that Marx

implemented "to figure out the economical reality of the epoch and to appreciate the tendencies of development engendered by that reality and the power willing to revolutionize it" (p. 4). In sum, the function of philosophy is "to prepare the theoretical frame within the scientific thinking of those who approach reality willingly and knowingly to transform it" (p. 4).

Second, the *political economy* allows Marx to respond, "What is society?" Within Marxism, the political economy "unveils the exploitation essence of the social relations that sustain the bourgeois means of production" (Marx & Engels; as cited in Pla, 2003, p. 4) through the law of surplus value, discovered by Marx. It is understandable that in the same way that capitalists will not be interested in knowing what capitalism is, but rather whether the mechanism to make profits functions properly, the proletariat is interested in knowing its living conditions and which conditions are needed to eradicate exploitation.

Third, after knowing "the essential exploitation of the capitalist relations of production, convinced of the need to overcome them and design the foundations to build new social relations," it is time to define a sociopolitical theory that identifies "what political mechanisms might firmly conduce us to the communist transformation of society" (Marx & Engels; as cited in Pla, 2003, p. 5), the historical mission of the proletariat, its strategies and tactics, its politics of alliances, its conception of the dominant class, and so on. "The specific mission of a socio-political theory of Marxism is to unveil the political methods of proletariat for the conversion of the prevailing-bourgeois relations in communist relations of cooperation" (p. 5), concluded Pla.

Marxism Is a Method and Guide for Action, a Theory, a Conception of the World

The dialectic as a historical method. In his debate with Proudhon in 1847, in *The Misery of Philosophy*, Marx (as cited in Marx & Engels, 1973) stated:

> What Mr. Proudhon has not been able to see is that men also produce woolen cloth and linen, according to their productive faculties. And even

> less, he has not been able to see that men who produce social relations according to their material productivity create also *ideas* and *categories*, the ideal abstract expressions of those social relations themselves.

According to Marx, Proudhon was unable to explain the historical movement because 'he has not perceived that men produce even their own relations of production" (Alonso, 1981, p. 115).

Conversely, the Marxist method is essentially historical because when considering men as producers of their own relations of production, we necessarily perceive that these social relations are the determined productive powers. Movement and social change, occurs when men give up determined "social forms," employing the dialectical method and strengthening the class struggle. The Marxist dialectic has a structural connection with the class struggle. In fact, "Philosophers (materialists and idealists) only have interpreted the world in different ways, but the point is to transform it" (Marx & Engels, 1973, p. 10).

Because the goal of a revolutionary movement is to build a just and human world, Marxism is the appropriate method and a guide for action. Marxism is a theory, a conception of the world, particularly of society and history. Those methods and guides emanate from this interpretation.

Marxism is in a continuing process of enrichment: coming back, correcting, modifying. Thus it is "a Marxist way to enrich Marxism" (De la Osa, 2003, p. 1). In this way we avoid a dogmatic conception. However, the other extreme is a risk: changing, modifying, dropping the "essential pillars of Marxism" (p. 2), trying to convert it into a deformed doctrine, annihilating its revolutionary instrument. Marxism cannot be a dogma; neither can Marxism be enriched by twisting it and ignoring the realities.

Marxism is, for instance, the theory that allows us to interpret how the aggressive imperialism we are experiencing "is becoming fascism" (De la Osa, 2003, p. 2). Also through Marxism we can understand why it is happening. In fact, we are facing an "oppression which has its own nature and to remain it needs to be destructive of others" (p. 2).

Furthermore, Marxism "not only teaches us to understand this phenomena but also how to fight , it gives us weapons, it gives us tools" (De la Osa, 2003, p. 2). Thus Marxism is a method and a guide.

In spite of the implicit imperfections and trial and error in its construction, there has not existed in human history a more humanitarian system than socialism. Finally, concerning the future, a fundamental question might be addressed: Is it possible that humans might give birth to insurgent dreams again?

Against its open and hidden detractors, Marxism "Is the natural event that humanity created in the XIX century: German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism" (Lenin, n.d., p.28). Marxism is the result of a process within the co-participation of theoretical sources. They are fundamentally, movements of the working class and the direct contact of Marx with these movements (Pla, 2003, p. 3).

April 1st 1970. The organization that will be called *Fuerzas Populares de Liberación FPL Farabundo Martí* is founded today.

Quemar las velas (Burning the sails)

Road from San Salvador to planes de Renderos. After the Hospital Neumológico, there is a narrow road to the left side and then a *finca* with an orange plantation. There, seven men are seated on the grass: three medical doctors, three bakers, and a nervous young teacher. ("If the fourth medical doctor did not go to Europe, I would not be here in this situation," he thinks.)

No, he is not scared of the Guardia! No! He is not scared to die. He is really nervous because in this historical meeting he is on the moon! The other six men talk and talk, and the younger only moves his head and eyes from side to side. He feels uncomfortable. "I hope that they do not ask my opinion," he thinks.

The topics are about how and which characteristics a new revolutionary organization should have. The aspects under discussion are the following. The asterisks mark those aspects that were approved.

1. Create a communist party with a last name such as "Authentic" "The true one" "Radical" "Proletario" . . .	*Create a political-military organization

2. Take a name from the beginning	*Initiate with no name and gain one through action
3. Do a big financial operation. To end charity and resolve the many needs (not only those needs of the little initial group, but their families). After the big strike, remain quiet. Settling and developing our organization	*Little economical recuperations to survive. These little operations would be taken as delinquent ones. (Of course, those operations would be executed with revolutionary methods!) Big operations are attractive but we have not accumulated enough operative training, neither sufficient underground sources, logistical means and fire power. These limitations would expose us to a hard strike enough to atrophy our gestation.
4. Ask for immediate recognition and support by international allies	*Gain recognition and support by own practice In the first times, the allies will not believe us. The Communist Party has already recommended us badly. The fundamental thing is to gain recognition and support.
In conclusion: Burning the sails	*Depart from the simple things to the complex

After more than four hours of intense discussion, that afternoon in 1970, those men decided not to burn the sails.

Requetediscutido *(Aspects or topics discussed many times)*

Sure! Other aspects had already been *requetediscutido*—discussed 100 times:

1. That it must be confirmed through action that army fighting is the fundamental track, and it must be wisely combined with other ways of fighting.

2. That the strategic foundation of the fight is to take power in order to constitute a popular government that would lay the basis for socialism.

3. That the war would inevitably face Yankee intervention, and it must be defeated if it is a true revolution.

4. That US imperialism and the dominant groups and dictatorships consider Central America as a totality, and, consequently, they would not allow consolidating a revolution in just one country. In addition, Central America is an erupting volcano. Thus, the interrelation of people, on one hand, and the interrelation of the enemies, on the other, creates the need to conceive revolution within a Central American frame.

5. That in the initial period it is strategic to forge a new political/ ideological frame that implies political study, adopting and applying rules, and training for combat—assembling and dissembling light weapons; recognizing territory and topography; and physical training.

From the Simple Things to the Complex

To learn the art of war by forging ourselves physically, politically, and militarily is a giant task. To advance in this strategic task requires wise, collective direction, to avoid desperation because of the immediate things, daily urgencies, and tactics. Hence, with regard to operations, we start from the easy to the difficult, from the simple things to the complex ones.

The Legacy of Marxism-Leninism

Marxism has been in permanent development since it first appeared about 160 years ago in Germany and England. Its two initiators, Karl Marx and Federico Engels, wanted Marxism to determine the objective laws that condition social development in order to be able to transform the world. In addition to the integral study of capitalism, Marxism allowed scientific predictions about the future of humanity. Its main sources were the dialectic philosophy of Hegel and the materialism of Feuerbach, the classical political economy of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, and the utopian socialism of Campanili, Owen, Fournier, and other thinkers from the 18th and early 19th centuries. Since its origin, Marxism has been challenging the imperious conceptions of different periods: idealism—

objective and subjective—and metaphysic materialism (Vilariño, 2003, p. 1), with idealism and materialism wearing different costumes and varied makeup and presenting assorted appearances.

When the original emancipator collapsed, an historical point of reference for my dreams of social liberation was broken. However, the debate between socialism and capitalism is still present. In fact, 15 years of transition to capitalism in the former Soviet Union are enough to judge the "impact of privatization, free market policies and other restoration measures on the economy, society and general welfare of the population" (Petras, 2004a., p. 1). In the former communist countries of East Europe and central Asia, "almost all basic industries have been taken over by European and U.S. multi-national corporations and by mafia billionaires or they have been shut down" (p. 1). As a result, there are "massive unemployment and temporary employment, relative stagnation, vast out-migration and the de-capitalization of the economy via illegal transfers, money laundering and pillage of resources" (p. 1). In Poland over 20% of the labour force is unemployed and 30% is employed in marginal, low-paying jobs (prostitution, contraband, drugs, flea markets, street vending, and the underground economy). The situation in Bulgaria, Rumania, Latvia, and East Germany is similar or worse. "The average real per capita growth over the past 15 years is far below the preceding 15 years under communism (specially if we include the benefits of health care, education, subsidized housing and pensions)" (p. 1). There are economic inequalities: "1% of the top income bracket controlling 80% of the private assets and more than 50% of income while poverty levels exceed 50% or even higher" (p. 1). Similarly in the Central Asian republics of Armenia, Georgian, and Uzbekistan, where living standards have fallen by 80%, and people are leaving (one fourth of the population) or are destitute. There industries, public treasure, and energy sources "have been pillaged" (p. 1). In Russia the situation is pillage and economic decline:

> In the mid 1990's over 50% of the population (and even more outside Moscow and St. Petersburg) lived in poverty, homelessness increased and

> comprehensive health care and education services collapsed. Never in peace-time modern history has a country fallen so quickly and profoundly as is the case of capitalist Russia. (p. 2)

The economy was privatized: taken over by "Russian gangsters led by eight billionaires' oligarchs who shipped over $200 billion dollars to banks in New York, Tel Aviv, London and Switzerland" (Petras, 2004a., p. 2). Some former Soviet bureaucrats, mafia bosses, US and Israeli banks, European land speculators, US empire builders, militarists, and multinational corporations that are enjoying the pillage will affirm that the change is going well. The reality is that that massive depredation has provoked unemployment and poverty that are favourable to "a huge increase in suicide, psychological disorders, alcoholism, drug addiction and diseases rarely seen in Soviet times"; and Russian males' life expectancy has dropped: from 64 years in the last year of socialism to 58 years in 2003 (*Wall Street Journal*, 2004; as cited in Petras, 2004, p.2), below the level of Bangladesh and 16 years below Cuba's 74 years (p.2). Even more, "the transition to capitalism in Russia alone led to over 15 million premature deaths (deaths which would not have occurred if life expectancy rates had remained at the levels under socialism" (p.2). There is more evidence of the effects of capitalism in these former socialist countries. Is it not sad? However, there are still dreams and dreamers.

"Failure" Does Not Mean That Marxist Theory Has Expired and Socialism Is Dead

The fall of the Soviet Union and socialist countries from Eastern Europe was certainly a hard strike against the international revolutionary movement. We cannot separate Marxism from political application in exercising power because "Marxism is linked to the real political health of real life. It cannot be separated from life because it is a conception that is immersed, is alive towards social change and the interpretation of society" (De la Osa, 2003, p. 1).

Living socialism as a system supposes that the inverse of capitalism should not be totalitarianism, slave-salary work, underdevelopment, poverty, and

so on. The former Soviet Union had a model that did not respond "to the basic foundations of socialism"; it did not adjust to "the concrete conditions of the development of productive power that staked the scientific and technical progress " (Castro, 2003, p. 2). That experience was based on a model with limitations: it was separated from the principles of Marxism, and there were mistakes in methods and administration, and idealism in its projections. There were internal factors such as an insufficient economic base and political conditions to foster the construction of socialism (lack of a scientifically founded model), and also there were mistakes of leadership. Externally, there was the permanent aggression from imperialists: a civil war from 1918 to 1923, the aggression from Hitler, the Cold War, the weapons race, and even the outer-space race. Imperialist capitalists never rested in their efforts to destroy the Soviet Union and to defeat socialism in other countries of Eastern Europe. Hence, the Soviet Union was obliged to live in a permanently alert state. Thus within this context, the energy, time, and resources that should be invested in economic development, in the vital needs of its huge population, and in the tasks to build socialism were expended on defence.

It is not my intention to justify or refute the internal and external factors. The analysis should be based not just on the internal factors (the Stalinism phobia, for instance), omitting the international conditions. It would be like throwing out the baby with the bathwater. What I maintain is that both should figure in the analysis of the attempt to build socialism.

The debate between capitalism and socialism is far from over. In spite of the aforementioned deficiencies in the political application of Marxism and in the administration and leadership of former socialist countries, there is no comparison between the "real existing capitalism" and the "full employment, moderate growth, welfare states that existed during the previous socialist period" (Petras, 2004, p. 3). In other words, "in terms of public and private security of life, employment, retirement and savings—the socialist system represented a far safer place to live than the gang controlled capitalist societies that replaced

them" (p. 3). Politically, these socialist states "were more responsive to the social demands of workers, provided some limits on income inequalities" (pp. 3-4), and the state owned all of the strategic and major sectors of the economy. The debate between capitalism and socialism still exists because "what has replaced socialism after the collapse of the USSR is far worse in every significant indictor" (p. 4), because "Cuba surpasses those of the emerging capitalist countries, and because in Latin America the emerging social movements have realized changes in self-government" (p. 4). And there is also an emerging socialism that is taking shape, combining "the welfare state of the past, the humane social programs and security measure of Cuba and the self-governments experiments of the EZLN and MST" (p. 4). The debate between capitalism and socialism will continue because Marxist theory has not expired, socialism is not dead and millions of the world's people continue suffering from material lacks.

Marxism and Leninism need to be developed more deeply and creatively than before, and the failures of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries of Eastern Europe must be studied, but the value of the Soviet Union's role in defeating Nazism and contending with aggressive imperialism for 70 years must also be stressed, as well as its contribution to movements of social and national liberation around the world, in spite of the known limitations. In addition, there is undeniable evidence that supports the fact that the living conditions of the population of these countries were far better than they are in the current situation under capitalism.

My Confirmation to Employ Historical Materialism as a Notion of Interpretation

> Historical materialism describes the inter-connection of political processes across time and place; it has nothing to do with anecdotal accounts that pick and choose 'facts' to fit a conservative mood. The theoretical point is that uneven development of Left politics across space and time defies political fiats reflecting particular conjunctures in specific regions. Methodologically, the development of mass struggle without theoreticians

> (at least without Anglo-American name recognition) does not lessen their significance as history-defining movements. (Petras, 2001a, p. 3)

Because breaking the chains of class society and clearing the road to communism are fundamental goals of revolutionaries, they must employ the appropriate methodology—the philosophy to understand the dynamics of society. Otherwise, pragmatism substitutes the long-term goal of communism with expressions such as "more practical," "realistic," and "immediately achievable" goals.

The nature of this dissertation supports the appropriate materialistic dialectic application. This is the materialistic conception of history—historical materialism—whose central conclusion is that communism is inevitable "under conditions that permit the contradictions driving capitalist society to reach their resolution" (Au, 2003, p. 5).

Historical materialism is like a frame that allows us to understand nature, society, and thought. It means a cohesive theory of the development of society from primitive communalism to the current imperialism. It implies "features of the development of social formations in terms of the contradiction between the forces of productions and the relations of productions" and also "the contradiction between the economic base and the superstructure" (political, legal, social, and cultural)" (Au, 2003, p. 5).

Marx discovered the materialistic conception of history and the revelation of capitalist production ie. the theory of surplus value. Both discoveries are needed to study the essential characteristics of capitalism in neoliberal globalization (led by financial-international capital). However, it is also very important to study the changes that this global capitalism has created: the interdependency of countries in the world market, the loss of sovereignty, the reduction of roles to the nation-state and its new role as an agent state, the denaturalization of culture, and differentiations in social classes.

> Revolutionary struggles emerged in countries where the general level of the 'forces of production' was low, but the level of exploitative social

> relations was strengthened by theoretical perspectives which looked at human agency as central, discrediting the mechanistic 'forces of production' argument used by the European Social Democrats and Communists to justify their active or passive pro-colonialist policies. (Petras, 2001a, p. 2)

We have been facing huge conservative waves. The oppressive conditions that capitalism and imperialism have been imposing everywhere create favourable conditions for fashions of philosophies that do not care about global capitalist social relations and their impact on human lives. But the same oppressive conditions lend themselves favourably to a sort of renaissance of Marxism—a renaissance that means not only to

> gain again the masses, and again convert itself in a theory which—as Marx himself used to say—is taking as something material what people themselves and the oppressed classes may use, but [also to convert itself] into a conception that has to be developed and enriched by everything that has occurred since Marx and Engels until our days. (De la Osa, 2003, p. 1)

Other fatalist positions fall into eternal lamentations of the past and deny its value. Still others go further. Since the late 1980s these have been talking about "the ending of history" and "ending of ideologies", and they talk about a series of crises: of Marxism, identity, state, values, war of civilizations, and so on. These positions are hopeless, ie. without hope, insofar as they sever understanding between the conditions of their own construction and the conditions of human possibility that are always at work within them. Restoring the interpretive connection between hopelessness and possibility is the mandate of critical pedagogy.

Critical Pedagogy

Introduction

It is my view that critical pedagogy provides more possibilities for education, teaching, and teachers to play a role in the great struggle for social

liberation. As I discussed above, I believe that the best solution to inequities and injustices based on exploitation is to eradicate the capitalist system and install socialism. The only way to eradicate capitalism is through revolution, which means taking over and maintaining economical, political, and ideological power. To achieve this fundamental goal is neither easy nor immediate. It is necessary to create subjective/favourable conditions among the oppressed; it is necessary to accumulate resources in organization and political means. There are strategies and tactics to propel this process of accumulation of strength. There is also a golden rule: The concrete conditions of a country will determine the application of a revolutionary strategy and program (which could be antifeudal and/or anticolonialist, or anticapitalist and/ or anti-imperialist, and sometimes antidictatorship.

Critical pedagogy provides more possibilities for education, teaching, and teachers to play a role in the great struggle for definitive liberation (revolution).

In fact, teachers and teaching are both able to be empowered by critical pedagogy (McLaren, 1999, p. 1). Thus, pedagogy and culture "are seen as intersecting fields of struggle" (p. 1).

Critical pedagogy manifests itself according to the context, far away from the boundaries of academicism. For instance, in El Salvador in the early 1980s Education was identified with the cause of the definitive liberation of people, teaching-oriented students in the classroom, based on the objective reality of the country, and teachers as fighters for their own demands with a revolutionary perspective. These teachers' battles joined the battles of other exploited and oppressed people. This revolutionary perspective was directed at a luminous future where there would be no more exploitation, repression, injustice, and anticulture.

This is how I see critical pedagogy empowering teachers and teaching for empowerment (McLaren, 1999, preface). Within this perspective, pedagogy and

culture are seen as intersecting fields of struggle. The work of the teacher, the life in the classroom and the purpose of schooling contribute to building critical thinking and practice (praxis).

Culture

Culture itself is not neutral, but something that "plays a role in the reproduction of the system" (McLaren, 1999, p. 1). Its contribution "is ideological: giving conceptions about human life and how to live it" (p.1). It is desirable that teachers not be the performers of a schooling ritual to foster conceptions of submission or ignorance in the real lives of people. Conversely, I see teachers with a strong confidence in the strengths of the oppressed to create a new society in which children will have a childhood and where, with no restrictions, their potentialities will be developed in art, technology, and culture, which are now oppressed by institutional violence and social marginalization.

I have difficulty in determining the moral reason for teachers' exercising the ritual of cultural production as "historically transmitted patterns of meaning embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which (humans) communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life'" (McLaren, 1999, p. 1). Conversely, teachers' rituals—as components of ideology—should be readdressed to help students to generate "perceptions of daily life and how we live it" (p. 1). This means encouraging critical thinking to gain consciousness expressed by action. In other words, teaching can help students to understand the world within which they are living and to arrive at the conclusion that this world needs to be changed and, furthermore, that it is possible and necessary to participate in that transformation.

This commitment of teachers—to address liberation in their teaching—is not in contradiction with teaching a vocation because it is a calling of love for others.

This ritual performance towards liberation increases love for the children; this love is enriching because of the love for exploited and oppressed people.

According to McLaren (2000), teaching is "the organization and integration of knowledge" to communicate this knowledge to students in specific "contexts and teacher/learner environments" (p. 1). Critical pedagogy, McLaren added, is a "dialectical and dialogical process that instantiates a reciprocal exchange between teachers and students" (p.1). Teachers might implement both teaching and critical pedagogy because their mission is to bring together people who share love and its power. I firmly believe in the "reciprocal power of dialogue" and in the irreversible commitment to concientizacion and political praxis (McLaren, 1999, p. 1). In fact, since 1968 I have learned that education may be a "vehicle for liberatory praxis" (p. 1)

> The pedagogical project is created in order to place. . . lives inside the classroom and to employ knowledge and transformation as weapons to change the world. From the perspective of the social location of the condemned on Earth, it becomes clear that knowledge alone, as intended by the school, does not transform life. Only the conversion of knowledge into action can transform life. This concretely defines the meaning of practice: the dialectic movement between the conversion of transformative action into knowledge and the conversion of knowledge into transformative action (Boff Leonardo, 1997, pp. xi-xii; as cited in McLaren, 2002, p.).

The conversion of knowledge into action to transform life implies a definition of "what the school should offer and how children should be served" (Apple, 1999, p. 1). The possibility to exercise critical pedagogy is even justified by the fact that the "educational and cultural system is a variable that dictates the maintenance of the existing domination and exploitation in the social order" (p. 1).

The need to implement critical pedagogy is triggered by the tendency for "educational institutions [to] serve less as the engines of democracy and equality than many of us would like" (Apple, 1999, p. 1). In other words, the school functions by reproducing "an unequal society" (based on its "fundamental

relations that enable society to reproduce itself again but only in the form as dominant and subordinate social order" [p. 2]). The question is why do teachers have to be the "operators" of this ideological factory to reproduce and preserve myths of democracy within an unequal society?

Dominant groups and their curriculum makers have been pushing harder and harder to charge schools with the responsibility of "producing" efficient and effective labour and leaders of the system. Why can teachers not contribute to the other side of the coin—to creating consciousness of a reality that needs to be transformed? Domination and exploitation are, in essence, "part of a large framework of social relations as it relates to cultural reproduction" (Apple, 1999, p. 2). This role has been there since the beginning; "social meanings of events and materials are established remarkably early in the school year" (p. 1). In other words, schools are not neutral, not only because they openly reinforce social inequities, but also because they distribute social and ideological categories that reinforce the "framework of institutions" (p. 1).

Furthermore, educational institutions' fundamental role "is the distribution of knowledge to students, some of whom are more *able* to acquire it because of cultural gifts that come *naturally* from their class or race or gender position" (Apple, 1999, p. 1). The context or system frame within which we are living and within which education occurs is capitalism—based on exploitation and oppression of the majorities by minorities. This frame will, as likely as not, affect the lives of those who are involved in education (p. 2).

Closing

There is a perspective to follow. As Freire (2002) asserted, "The future isn't something hidden in a corner. The future is something we build in the present" (p. 2). For instance, we should no longer allow blackmail from rightists (supported unconsciously by well-intentioned, but naive people, and based on

the undeniable deficiencies of leaders and governments of the failed socialist countries) to promote the idea that Marxism-Leninism does not work and that socialism is dead.

Alongside the pessimism spread by neoliberalism and the 'end of history,' Che Guevara is still an inspiration, a living hope for the dreams of social liberation not just in Latin America, but also worldwide. He is a "voice of freedom from justice. He is a role model. He is part of the history." He is "a symbol of freedom, a symbol of emancipation from suppression, a symbol of hope (for all nationalities)" (Cahen, n.d., p. 1).

> Why should educators bother to engage with the legacies of Che Guevara and Paulo Freire, especially now that the "end of history" has been declared? Especially, too, when broadside condemnations of Marxism abound uncontested. And why now, at a time when the marketplace has transformed itself into a deus ex machina ordained to rescue humankind from economic disaster and when voguish theories imported from France and Germany can abundantly supply North American radicals with veritable plantations of no-risk, no fault, knock- off rebellion? (McLaren, 1999, p. 4)

On the other hand, critical pedagogy has a role to confront and defeat the penetration of this campaign in academia in capitalist countries. Critical pedagogy may do something against the conversion of history in ethnography and anthropology (Almeyra, 2003, p. 1).

Consciousness of oppression by itself does not generate freedom. Education by itself does not transform society. However, the educational practice named "Critical Theory", or "Critical Pedagogy", or "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" or "Pedagogy of Liberation", provides a very important contribution to the whole revolutionary process: awakening consciousness and even organizing people.

Finally, critical pedagogy might be useful in combating the schools' production of competitive-like robots.

And, then to be a teacher wouldn't require

a calling, a voice, a love to serve,
but skills to handle computers,
the commanding voice of a foreman.
And then the students wouldn't read,
but see data on screens;
they wouldn't consciously act,
but would become appendices of machines;
they wouldn't critically think,
but manipulate "mice" and buttons;
they wouldn't be able to love,
but calculate their economical prospects;
and they would not even make love;
but "link" their bodies online.

Keeping in mind their essential differences Paulo Freire and Ernesto Che Guevara are the delivers of very good news for politics in general and education, two parts of a whole. With Freire we may initiate making sense of education and approaching that social reality which we want to radically transform. With Che Guevara we learn how and what to do to transform the social reality, and how to face the economical, political, social, ideological and cultural implications for humans. Both are examples, models for teachers and for humanity. Let's see some of their great contributions.

CHAPTER NINE:

CHE GUEVARA AND PAULO FREIRE: TWO EXAMPLES FOR TEACHERS

Introduction

In his book "Che Guevara, Paulo Freire, and the Pedagogy of Revolution" McLaren (2003) states that Che Guevara and Paulo Freire's pedagogies "are resources for 'creating the type of critical agency necessary to contest and transform current global relations of exploitation and oppression' " (Rikowski, 2005, p. 1).

"Today's insipid critical pedagogy" can be removed "with the spirit of Che", argues McLaren, moving away "from textualism and towards a practical pedagogy aimed at giving students resources for effective social critique and activism" (1). Freire's "method for literacy programmes was tied to struggles for human liberation" (p. 1). Both Che Guevara and Paulo Freire, summarizes McLaren, "have given us a pedagogical course of action" and "enable engagement in pedagogies with the abolition of human suffering as the goal of the education enterprise itself" (pp. 1-2). The mission of these two educators "has relevance for our time", adds McLaren because "the dissolution of the capitalist system involves simultaneously the transformation of the human heart" (p. 2).

Progressive and left educators have been studing the impact of neoliberal globalization and transnational corporations on public education; however for Mc Laren these attempts are not enough for the advance of the "cause of critical pedagogy, specially in the face of the current corporate assault on public schooling" (McLaren, 2005, p. 1). It is urgent, he adds, to overcome the "equivocations and revisionism of the postmodern Left and develop a critical pedagogy that is able to challenge the devastating effects brought about by the globalization of capitalism" (p.1). He concludes that in reforming institutions of public education it is fundamental "to take up a dynamic new revolutionary

politic in keeping with the examples offered by the life and dialectical thought of Che Guevara and Paulo Freire" (p.1).

Paulo Freire an example for teachers

The "Banking" Concept of Education Is to Domesticate Students

The intention is not to make teachers feel guilty, but some are still narrating contents that seem to be dead and petrified. Even reality is presented as "motionless, static, compartmentalized, and predictable" (Freire, 1998, p. 67). Another alienating strategy of conventional pedagogy is to present "a topic completely alien to the existential experience of the students" (p. 67). Thus the teacher wants to

> "fill" the students with the contents of his narration—contents which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them and could give them significance. Words are emptied of their concreteness and become a hollow, alienated, and alienating verbosity. (p. 67)

Therefore the teacher is a narrator and his/her students are "'containers,' 'receptacles to be "filled" by the teacher.' The more completely she fills the receptacles, the better a teacher she is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are" (p. 67).

Education has been reduced to an act of depositing: the depositor (teacher) makes deposits in the depositories (students). They receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the 'banking' concept of education (Freire, 1998, pp. 67-68) where even knowledge becomes a subject of power because it becomes "a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (p. 68). The consequences of the banking concept of education are serious:

> The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their

> intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them.
>
> The capability of banking education to minimize or annul the students' creative power and to stimulate their credulity serves the interests of the oppressors, who care neither to have the world revealed nor to see it transformed. (p. 69)

Again, what is behind the banking concept of education is a conception of human being and the world:

> The assumption of a dichotomy between human being and the world: a person is merely *in* the world, not *with* the world or with others; the individual is spectator, not re-creator. In this view, the person is not a conscious being (*corpo consciente*); he or she is rather the possessor of a consciousness: an empty 'mind' passively open to the reception of deposits of reality from the world outside. (Freire, 1998, pp. 70-71)

Thus education is again confirming its role in siding with oppressors and its unfair system: "Education as the exercise of domination stimulates the credulity of students, with the ideological intent (often not perceived by educators) of indoctrinating them to adapt to the world of oppression" (p. 73).

Humanistic and revolutionary educators will engage in "critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization" (p. 70). They must feel "a profound trust in people and their creative power" (p. 70) and "be partners of the students in their relations with them" (p. 70). There are noble missions to achieve through praxis, which in our case means "the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it" (Freire, 1998, p. 73).

In this conception of liberating education, there are several concepts that undergo qualitative changes. First, "the teacher is no longer merely the- one- who teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach" (p.74). Clearly,

> Education as the practice of freedom—as opposed to education as the practice of domination—denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world

> exists as a reality apart from people. Authentic reflection considers neither abstract man nor the world without people, but people in their relation with the world. In these relations consciousness and world are simultaneous: consciousnesses neither precedes the world nor follows it. (p. 75).

Education does not end its role because of "the unfinished character of human beings and the transformational character of reality. Education is thus constantly remade in the praxis. In order to *be* it must *become*" (Freire, 1998, p. 78).

Education Is Political and Not Neutral

> For education to play its role each student must become "unquietly critical, challenged to understand that the world which is being presented as given is, in fact, a world being made, and for this very reason it can be changed, transformed and reinvented." (Harold Raynolds Jr.; as cited in Freire, 1993b, p. 10)

We can analyse education quantitatively and qualitatively, and we will find that both categories have deficits and a dynamic and contradictory relationship (p. 15). In other words, cutting the budget for public education will affect its quality.

Furthermore, we must be specific about those most impacted by the two deficits of education: "Above all, the working poor . . . the poor children—those who could go to school and stay there—are the ones who suffer the most from the inequality of education" (p. 16). Within educational practice—for instance, in the evaluation process—the assessment of knowledge does not privilege poor children; neither does it consider their life experience:

> The evaluation criteria the school uses to measure students' knowledge—intellectualism, formal, bookish—necessarily helps these children from the so called privileged social classes, while they hurt children from poor and low socioeconomic background. And in the evaluation of the knowledge base of children—evaluated when they first arrive in school and during the time they stay in school—the mechanism in general never takes into consideration any 'knowledge from life experience' the children bring with them to school. Thus the poor students are put into a disadvantageous

> position. The experience of children from the middle class results in the acquisition of a middle-class vocabulary, prosody, syntax, in the final analysis a linguistic competence that coincides with what the school regards as proper and correct. The experience of poor children takes place not within the domain of the written word, but within direct action. (pp. 16-17)

Consequently, "children who lack familiarity with written words or who have an infrequent need for writing, both in the streets and home" (p. 17), will face hard times and have more difficulty trying to convert from oral language to written language. Contrary to the tester's opinion, the lack of these experiences does not "develop in these children a different 'nature' that determines their absolute incompetence" (p. 17).

What could make a real difference in education would be continued reflection on teaching practice and an open attitude to learning while teaching (pp. 20-21). Similarly, it would be beneficial to be more consistent and to reduce and even annihilate "the distance between what we say and what we do" (p. 22).

I do not support negating practice for the sake of theory, which sometimes becomes pure verbalism or intellectualism. Conversely, to negate theory for the sake of practice may create a disconnectedness of practice. Instead, what is desirable is "the unity between theory and practice" (p. 23).

There are no ambiguities that can trigger confusion on the political nature of education. In fact, direction, objectives, and others aspects of educational practice make education political and absolutely not neutral (p. 22). We cannot

> "teach content by itself as if the school context in which this content is treated could be reduced to a neutral space where social conflicts would not manifest themselves, nor can the exercise of "thinking correctly" be disconnected from the teaching of content...
> Moreover, for a coherent progressive educator it is not possible to minimize, and dismiss the knowledge from lived experiences that students bring to school. (p. 24)

To summarize, there is no reason to be shocked by the open political and ideological preference of my pedagogical project. In fact, "every pedagogical project is political and filled with ideology. The issue is to determine in whose favour or against whom educational politics, which is a necessary component of education, is constructed" (p. 40).

Conservative-regressive sectors try hard to deny the obvious political and ideological preference of education. Unfortunately, even many open, honest educators believe in a supposed neutrality that simply does not exist.

We can learn how to read the world by reading the word.

I am not importing the pedagogical practices of Freire (as cited in Araujo Freire & Macedo, 1998), but rather "reinventing them" (p. 6), as he claimed. I am re-creating and rewriting his ideas (p. 6). I must also be alert to reducing the literacy method of Freire to a "mere set of techniques associated with the learning of reading and writing" (p. 6). His conception is far from this limited interpretation. Instead, there is an invitation to see men and women - the adults who are learning to be literate - as producers of society. They are motivated to understand that they are the makers of culture. And, finally, the position of the lower popular class is not a "divine determination" but a social result of an "economical and political-ideological context of the society they live in" (p. 7).

"Pedagogy of the oppressed" implies that literacy learners first feel "the importance, the necessity, and the possibility" (p. 7) of reading and writing. They will become not just literate, but also politically aware of their reality. In fact, the learners "discuss the object to be known and the representation of reality to be decodified" (p. 7). They respond to questions from the coordinator of the group, and in doing so, they begin "gradually deepening their readings of the world" (p. 7). Further debates may encourage the literacy learner to be involved in "political practices aiming at social transformation" (p. 7).

> What? Why? How? To what end? Against whom? By whom? In favour of whom? In favour of what?" These are questions that provoke literacy

> learners to focus on the substantiveness of things, their reason for being, their purpose, the way they are done, etc. (p. 7)

What has been successful for literacy is having "the learner's reality as a starting point" (p. 8), that is the current context within which student teachers and students of other carriers are living. That is the "starting point" for breaking illiteracy. Furthermore, in becoming literate in scientific, technical, and social matters, these people will take "ownership of the written code and politicize themselves, acquiring a total view of language and the world" (p. 8). Thus, becoming literate in a scientific matter means, for instance, that the person is no longer a simple applauder of the incredible progress of science. Instead, he/she becomes capable of thinking critically, inquiring not only about what the scientific matter is, but also why, how, etc. The literacy process is not a mechanical act, but a dialectical and integral one: Reading the world and the word are inseparable (p. 8).

To gain literacy by reading and writing the *cartilhas* (literacy workbooks) are useless. The work of Freire is more than simply a method for literacy education. It "is a broad and deep understanding of education that has its political nature at the core of its concerns" (p. 8). Even more clear, the "method" of Freire is a sort of "educational tactic designed to achieve a necessary strategy: politicizing the Brazilian people," alleviating "those who do not yet know the written word from a condition of submission, of immersion and passivity" (p. 9).

Freire's 'method' has transcended boundaries, not just to gain literacy in writing and reading, but in application to educational theory and practice and politics generally. Second, it is not just Brazilian people who need literacy and politicizing, but all people. In terms of "political literacy" - knowing the causes and effects of political and social facts - it is common to find high rates of illiteracy in developed, semi-developed, and underdeveloped countries.

Freire tried to give Brazilian people access to "the act of reading the world by reading the word" (p. 9). Therefore those who already know how to read and

write words do not necessarily know how to "read the world," because Freire's ideas about "the act of knowing transcends the method for which he is known," and "the originality of Freire's work does not reside in the efficacy of his literacy methods but, above all, in the originality of its content designed to develop our consciousness" (p. 9). This theory is based on a "humanizing education" as a "path" for women and men to gain consciousness about "their presence in the world," how they act and think (p. 9). Is there any reason to deny this "humanizing education" to people worldwide?

The dialogical model allows Freire to help students gain awareness of their presence in the world. This model, however, does not mean "conversation about individual's lived experiences" as an "act of liberation," a "form of group therapy focused on psychology of the individual" (p. 10).

The dialogical method means to share experience "within a social praxis that entails both reflection and political action" (p.10). Thus this model does not have anything to do with any "romantic pedagogical mode" as "a form of middle-class narcissism" that avoids "dealing with the issue of class privilege" (p. 10). The paternalistic claim to empower students, or "to give them voices," Freire (1990) rejected:

> The pedagogy of the oppressed animated by authentic humanism (and not humanitarianism) generously presents itself as pedagogy of man. Pedagogy which begins with the egoistic interests of the oppressors (egoism cloaked in the false generosity of paternalism) and makes of the oppressed the objects of its humanitarianism, itself maintains and embodies oppression). It is an instrument of dehumanization. (p. 39)

The impact that the application of the pedagogy of the oppressed would have if teachers consciously worked with learners as facilitators to help the learners to gain consciousness of their present reality and to know their potential to transform reality by themselves is unimaginable.

The oppressed are not outsiders, but insiders of society.

The oppressors "use the banking concept of education in conjunction with a paternalistic social action apparatus, within which the oppressed receive the euphemistic title of 'welfare recipients' " (p. 60). Thus, the oppressed

> are treated as individual cases, as marginal persons who deviate from the general configuration of a 'good, organized, and just' society. The oppressed are regarded as the pathology of a healthy society, which must therefore adjust these 'incompetent and lazy' folk to its own patterns by changing their mentality. These marginals need to be integrated, incorporated into the healthy society that they have 'forsaken' (pp. 60-61).
>
> The truth is, however, that the oppressed are not 'marginal,' are not people living 'outside' society. They have always been inside the structure that made them 'beings for others.' The solution is not to integrate them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become 'beings for themselves.' Such transformation, of course, would undermine the oppressors' purpose; hence their utilization of the banking concept of education to avoid the threat of student conscientization" (p. 61).

The most used tools to oppress people are tests for everything: "Increased testing, which is fundamentally useless, has stigmatized students and schools for 'failing' to meet the prescribed, accepted, or 'received' truth based on the concept of a static and finite body of knowledge" (Harold Raynolds Jr.; as cited in Freire, 1993b, p. 10). Thus,

> competition to the contrary, the public schools are further weakened, tested again, and punished in a round of punitive efforts that miss the mark of a public school in which students make knowledge of their own experience and learn to take an active role in the continuing transformation of society. (pp. 10-11)

Is humanization a possibility?

Yes, if it is situated within history in "concrete, objective contexts" (Freire, 1998, p. 45). Dehumanization occurs not only in "those whose humanity has been stolen," but also in "those who have stolen it" (p. 45). These losses are the result of an economical, political, and social system based on exploitation,

oppression, and violence. Therefore the highest mission of the oppressed is to liberate themselves and do so by giving the former oppressors the possibility to liberate themselves (p. 48).

Pedagogy of the oppressed is addressed to the social liberation of the oppressed by themselves. The first condition is that the oppressed gain consciousness of their presence and location in a reality: a contradictory dialectical relationship between themselves—the oppressed—and the oppressors. In spite of its being a strong motivation, this perception does not "automatically" generate liberation. It is also necessary that the oppressed recognize their real and potential power to transform that reality.

The fact that individual oppressors may become anguished deserves the same consideration, but it does not mean that it will generate solidarity with the oppressed, because they are not able to

> enter into the situation of those with whom one has solidarity; it is a radical posture. If what characterizes the oppressed is their subordination to the consciousness of the master, as Hegel affirms, true solidarity with the oppressed means fighting at their side to transform the objective reality which has made them these "beings for another." The oppressor has solidarity with the oppressed only when he stops regarding the oppressed as an abstract category and sees them as persons who have been unjustly dealt with, deprived of their voice, cheated in the sale of their labour - when he stops making pious, sentimental, and individualistic gestures and risks an act of love. True solidarity is found only in the plenitude of this act of love, in its existentiality, in its praxis. To affirm that men and women are persons and as persons should be free, and yet to do nothing tangible to make this affirmation a reality, is a farce. (pp. 50-51)

That contradiction, oppressor-oppressed, will not disappear by itself (p. 51). At this point we must be careful to avoid confusion between subjectivity and objectivity: "neither objectivism nor subjectivism... but rather subjectivity and objectivity in constant dialectical relationship" (p. 51). This is very important because it implies a conception of world and people:

> To deny the importance of subjectivity in the process of transforming the world and history is naïve and simplistic. It is to admit the impossible: a

> world without people. That objectivistic position is as ingenious as that of subjectivism which postulates people without a world. World and human beings do not exist apart from each other, they exist in constant interaction. Marx does not espouse such a dichotomy, nor does any other critical realistic thinker. What Marx criticized and scientifically destroyed was not subjectivity, but subjectivism and psychologism. Just as objective social reality exist not by chance, but as the product of human action, so it is not transformed by chance. If humankind produce social reality (which in the "inversion of the practice" turns back upon them and conditions them), then transforming that reality is an historical task, a task for humanity. (p. 51)

In other words, if the revolutionary end is the radical transformation of objective reality, then the perception of reality must be followed by critical intervention. Without such critical intervention, there would be no true perception, but a "case of a purely subjectivist perception by someone who forsakes objective reality and creates a false substitute" (p. 52).

This pedagogy works with people in order that they recognize "themselves as oppressed." In other words, they are "developers of this pedagogy":

> No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption. . . . This is why, as we affirmed earlier, the pedagogy of the oppressed cannot be developed or practiced by the oppressors. (p. 54)

Legitimate violence by the oppressed is the result of the original violence inflicted by oppressors in the system

When the oppressed respond to the violence of the oppressors, the oppressors diminish and radically distort their motives for rebelling against subjugation. Propaganda and the media brand the oppressed as "barbarian," "bandits," "savages" and "terrorists," and call their revolutionary actions "violent," and "barbaric". According to Freire (1998) the reality is very different:

> Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons—not by those who are oppressed, exploited and unrecognized. It is not the unloved who initiate disaffection, but those

> who cannot love because they love only themselves. It is not the helpless, subject to terror, who initiate terror, but the violent, who has the power to create the concrete situation which begets the "rejects of life." It is not the tyrannized who initiate despotism, but the tyrants. It is not the despised who initiate hatred, but those who despise. It is not those whose humanity is denied them who negate humankind, but those who denied that humanity (thus negating their own as well). Force is used not by those who have become weak under the preponderance of the strong, but by the strong that have emasculated them. (p. 55)

But the oppressors not only employ structural violence within the oppressor-oppressed relationship perse. The oppressors are even more violent when they perceive that the oppressed not only want to meet immediate and vital needs and interests, but also are pursuing revolutionary objectives. And when the oppressed triumph, the recent oppressors will use violence to sabotage, stop, and ruin the revolutionary project. In their media and propaganda they will describe themselves as the 'poor victims' or 'oppressed':

> More and more, the oppressors are using science and technology as unquestionably powerful instrument for their purpose; the maintenance of the oppressive order through manipulation and repression. The oppressed as objects, as "things" have no purposes except those their oppressors prescribe for them. (pp. 58-59)

We need to join the great contribution of Paulo Freire with the promethean spirit of Ernesto Che Guevara

Che's political perspective "recalls a promethean image of human beings fighting to change their world. The current globalists are remininiscent of the pessimism of Schopenhauer regarding the perspectives for changing capitalism". (Petras, 2003, p. 2)

In spite of the great contribution of Freire's pedagogy it cannot by itself make the revolutionary changes that devise a new society. We need Marxism and Leninism applied to the particular conditions of our reality. We need Freire

to empower the possibilities of education and we need Ernesto Che Guevara to learn to apply Marxism Leninism, but over all, to learn his pedagogical touch for leadership.

A pedagogy of social liberation means stressing the importance of teachers' roles and education itself in the process of total emancipation involving no exploitation and no oppression. Nevertheless, we must clarify that this pedagogy has potential only within the frame of the general struggle; in other words, as one of the multiple parts of the revolutionary process. Pedagogy of the oppressed in isolation from the revolutionary current would be another example of idealistic practice with no real perspectives for the oppressed to liberate themselves.

Within the frame of the revolutionary process, there are two moments in the application of pedagogy of the oppressed: (a) before taking power, when, in this moment, "the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through praxis commit themselves to transformation" (Freire, 1998, p. 54); and (b) after people have taken power, "this pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes a pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation" (p. 54).

Yes, humanization is a possibility in a more humane world, and a humane world is a possibility if there is humanization. This is not a matter of rhetoric. To understand this, however, one needs to be realistic and objective enough to appreciate the dialectical interrelation between humans and the world: One cannot exist without the other. But one needs also to be idealistic and subjective enough to realize that transforming humans and the world is possible. In other words, within the process of eradicating the old order, the revolutionaries must begin to change themselves. When people have taken the power, this process of transformation accelerates through the disalienation of work and through a permanent political and pedagogical work with people.

The process of conscientization is a complex one that is not acquired by intellectual means only; then it would be just charlatanism. It is fundamental that the oppressed "become involved in the organized struggle for their liberation" (p. 63). In becoming involved in action, "they begin to believe in themselves" (p. 63). However, it cannot "be limited to mere activism, but must include serious reflection" (p. 63). This will be praxis.

> Critical and liberating dialogue, which presupposes action, must be carried on with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation. The content of that dialogue can and should vary in accordance with historical conditions and the level at which the oppressed perceive reality. (p. 63)

In every moment of the revolutionary process, "the oppressed must see themselves as women and men engaged in the ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human" (p. 63). At this point it must be clear that reflection and action not only are two parts of totality, but also "become imperative" because humanity always has its historical forms—that we cannot dichotomize" (p. 63):

> The insistence that the oppressed engage in reflection on their concrete situation is not a call to armchair revolution. On the contrary, reflection—true reflection—leads to action. On the other hand, when the situation calls for action, that action will constitute and authentic praxis only if its consequences become the object of critical reflection. In this sense, the praxis is the new *raison d'être* of the oppressed; and the revolution, which inaugurates the historical moment of this *raison d'être,* is not viable apart from their concomitant conscious involvement. Otherwise, action is pure activism. (p. 64)

Hence, the conscious decision of the oppressed to participate in the struggle for liberation is not a "gift bestowed by the revolutionary leadership, but the result of their own *conscientization*" (p. 65). However, the role of the revolutionary leadership throughout the process is undeniable. A revolutionary movement does not succeed without leadership. "This will establish a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed" (p. 66). This is possible through the

revolutionary and Marxist organization. Otherwise the theory, even though it is right, does not concretize in a real revolutionary project.

The names revolutionary, insurgents and subversives must be vindicated

In the context of contemporary capitalism, the militants or activists are 'revolutionary' because they want changes that are serious and profound. They fight to radically eradicate the capitalist political, economic and social structures and they want to build socialism. They are 'insurgents' because they do disobey and do not respect the institutionalism of the unjust order. And, finally, these militants or activists are 'subversive' because they want to undermine the system. These three terms exercised within revolutionary values, principles and ethics make sense of the genuine dreams of Marxists' objectives. I am wondering if the theory and educational praxis of Paulo Freire really meet these three conditions. No doubt that it was revolutionary. How much was his praxis insurgent if he did not count with the political instrument of revolutionary organization? Even the organization and action of teachers in isolation is not enough to make a revolution. To subvert a system not just revolutionary theory is needed but the organical and political instrument to erode the foundations of capitalism. Freire had faith in his political party and from the education offices of Sao Paulo he tried to contribute his best.

It is critical to reestablish confidence in people's abilities to fight; it is fundamental that optimism be regained. Defeating exploitation and building solidarity are not easy. They have a high cost that becomes higher because the capitalist class and its supporters fiercely oppose the transformation of society.

Therefore, here is the invitation to teachers to join the higher expression of love: Fight for a new society in which the oppressed and exploited can live humanely thanks to the redistribution of wealth, social services, education, and culture. If we do not consider ourselves one of the oppressed or exploited then our participation will be motivated by our love for others - those who experience oppression and exploitation of any kind. . . .

Revolutionaries must be prepared to stop the violent acts of the former oppressors

Freire did not believe in violence as a means for taking economical and political power. Non violence is desirable, but previous attempts have not passed the test: in 1950s Bolivia and Guatemala, for instance; in 1960s Dominican Republic; in 1970s Chile and the chains of dictatorships in Central America, the Caribbean, and South America; in 1980s Grenada and Nicaragua; and in 1990s Panama was invaded. Cuba still being targeted and Venezuela is struggling to defend its modality of institutional revolution.

> In order for oppressor and oppressed to become humble, it is necessary for the oppressor to convert to the cause of the oppressed, and for the oppressed to commit to his own fight for liberation. It is only from that point that both will have met the requirements of learning humility. (Freire; as cited in Araujo Freire & Macedo, 1998, p. 280)

The reality, though, is that the action of the dominant classes in Latin American countries and other Third Word regions and their master, US imperialism, is still massively predominant. Those in power do not respond to the 'invitation' to reform themselves, and leave behind all traces of exploitation and oppression. It is likely that they will respond with violence. The "conversion of oppressors" and their learning of humility that Freire claims, is a lapses of idealism, useless for the cause of social liberation. The exceptional cases of individuals who convert to the cause of the oppressed are just exceptions that must not influence the revolutionary strategy.

Ernesto Che Guevara an example for teachers

> It does not matter which picture. Any picture: serious, smiling, holding a weapon, with or without Fidel, giving a speech at the United nations, or dead, with the bare torso and partially opened eyes, as if the other side of life still wanted to accompany the track of the world he must leave, as if it would not accept to ignore for ever the path of the infinite creatures that were close to being born. About each of these images one could reflect deeply, in a lyrical way or in a dramatic way, with the prosaic objectivity of a historian or simply as if someone is going to talk about a friend who

> he discovers he has lost because he never came to know him (Saramago, 2003, p. 1).

Introduction

Che Guevara had multiple conditions and virtues that made him an exceptional human being.

> Che was a guerrilla combatant exemplar, a brilliant statesman, a paradigmatic leader of the people, with a high spirit of personal sacrifice and an immense love of work and its ethical meaning. All these qualities make Che a prototype of the new man (Borrego, 2001, p. 7).
> He always couples theory with practice, applies his ideas practically, and expresses them in his working methods, style of direction, educative labour (p. 8), and more.

Ernesto Guevara de la Serna whose life's main pedagogical principles were addressed "to generate socialist consciousness and praxis" was a traveler.

1952

Che's made his first trip with Alberto Granados through Argentina, Chile, Peru and Venezuela.

I am 5 years old and spend my day playing on the sidewalk and the stone street with sardine cans, little rocks, sticks and soda caps.

1953

On June 12, 1953 Ernesto Guevara de la Serna receives his medical diploma in Buenos Aires. In Cuba, meanwhile, Fidel Castro and dozens of youths prepare the last details of the assault on the Moncada barracks. The action is done on July 26, 1953. After his graduation Che starts his second trip over the American continent. In 1953 he meets some exiled Cubans in Costa Rica, and the same year he meets others in Guatemala.

1954

In Guatemala Che begins political participation and sees imperialism and its puppet Colonel Castillo Armas overthrow the elected, popular and democratic

government of Colonel Jacobo Arbenz on June 19, 1954. He arrives in Mexico on September 21, 1954.

I am 7 years old. We are also evicted by abusers of power from the meson of Los Caturria because my brother's cat, Bobby, tried to make a nest on the roof for her kittens to be born in.

1955

In June - July 1955, in Mexico Che meets Raúl and Fidel Castro.

I am 8 years old. I am barefoot and without a second pair of pants or shirt. We live on charity at my great grandpa's house. He had been the architect of the arranged marriage of my grandma with one of his sons in order to poach her wealth. While Che is walking the streets of Mexico City, I and my family are living in extreme poverty, hunger and many deprivations which are shaping my life.

1956

From April to June 24, in Mexico, Che trains with other Cuban revolutionaries. On June 24 he is arrested by the Mexican police. July 31 he and his Cuban companions are released. In August and September he is underground and continues training. On November 25 he and Fidel and 80 Cubans depart in the yacht Granma from Tuxpan Harbor. On December 2, 1956, the exhausted troop lands in "Las Colorado's" beaches, losing equipment. Those men walk long hours through pentanes of salad water wearing new boots that provoke blisters on their feet. They are hungry and thirsty. On December 5 afternoon the 82 combatant were attacked by the Batista forces. Only 12 survive.

I am 9 years old and struggling with hunger. I am the delivery boy: running to buy tortillas and delivering small notes to my father "*Carlos, por favor, manda con Moris los 10 colones del mes. Ya es 20 y no los has mandado. Gracias, Haydee.*" (Carlos, please, send with Moris the 10 colones for this month.

It is already the 20th and you have not sent it. Thank you, Haydee). or *"Dr. Cativo, perdone la molestia. ¿podría hacer el favor de prestarme 5 colones? Se lo agradeceré. Mercedes ..."* (Dr Cativo, sorry to trouble you. Could you please lend me 5 colones. I will be thankful to you. Mercedes). I am the "good boy" because by then my older brother is already in permanent insurgency at home. He no longer allows himself to be physically, verbally and emotionally abused by my mother. Instead he is a violent boy who destroys the poor pieces of furniture, shouts and insults. My younger brother is only 5 years old and does not yet face the sick "home sweet home" within which we live.

1957

January 17, Che fights in the Plata, the first victory of the insurgents. On March 22 he has victory in Palma Mocha. On May 28 he is a combatant (before, he was the medical doctor of the guerrillas). May 28, Che fights in Uvero. In July he gains the grade as captain; and on July 21 Fidel promotes Che to Commandant of Column. August 30 Che participates in the battle of Hombrito, September 15 combat of Pino del Agua. November 4 Che initiates the El Cubano Libre newspaper. December 8 Che was shot in the foot.

I am a 10 years old, and events continue shaping my life. We move from the house of the grumpy greatgrandpa because of an argument with my mother. He knew that after 27 years my grandma was going to recover three of the properties which had been stolen from her. This great grandpa, his wife and their three boys were the depredators of my defenseless young grandma. In less than ten years they have devastated the wealth of the 13 year old! And now, in 1957, as if their abuse was not enough, he wants again to practice his parasite habits! And he is not a "poor" man". This vicious man has a house and two coffee plantations. Then we move to the house of Tia Eva, my grand mother's cousin. What a generous woman she is! In that house she lives with her husband and their three children and 6 nephews and nieces. And then we increased the population by five more!

My grandma has to pay lawyers and debts. Those little notes that I used to deliver, asking for small loans become 'legal promises of payment' with the amount sky rocketed by voracious demands. The two coffee plantations have to be sold. After a while we moved to the Hacienda, I think that was later in 1957.

1958

February 24, Che starts radio Rebelde. May 3 he gains the grade of first commander of the rebel force, as head of the column 8 "Ciro Redondo". May, June, July, Che participates in a number of battles. In July, Fidel congratulates him. August 31 his columns start the journey towards Las Villas. October 17, Combat Guinia de Miranda. On the 15 to 18 of December Fomento is taken; on December 23 Cabaiguán; December 25, Placetas; December 26, Remedios; December 28 – January 1st, Santa Clara.

I am 11 years old and in grade 4. This is a very good year! We are living in the hacienda and I have space to play! I like to ride the horses of people who rent the pasture. My cousins and I enjoy racing their horses over the plains.

1959

January 1st the dictator of Cuba leaves. Fidel orders Che to continue to the capital. Che and Camilo lead two columns that were decisive in the rebel's triumph of January 4.

I am 12 years old, grade 5. I like to hear Radio Havana Cuba "Territorio Libre de America" (Free Territory of America), while I am seated on the branches of the old amate tree. From that time on Cuba is in my heart.

1960 to April 1965

Che was a leader of the revolutionary government as head of the Industrial Department, president of the National Bank, delegate of the government in international events worldwide. From April 24 to November 21 Che and 370 Cubans went to contribute to the revolutionaries in the Congo. On

October 3, 1965, the Cuban government published the farewell letter that Che had given to Fidel on April 10, 1965. He returns to Cuba in December, 1965. He and his companions train, and later, in October, 1966 Che goes to Bolivia to fulfill his commitment to return to Latin America. There, in Bolivia, he was captured on October 8, 1967 and killed the next day.

Che's amazing transformation

According to Fidel, some of the characteristics of Che are his simplicity, character, nature, fraternity, his personality, his originality... (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999a, p.3); his spirit of hatred and disregard for imperialism. Fidel adds

> "...he was a man of deep ideas... in whose mind there were dreams of the struggle in other parts of the continent and, however, that altruism, that disinterest, that disposition to always do the more difficult things, to put his life constantly in risk (p. 9).

This is how he earned the grades of Commander and head of the second column on July 21, 1957.

But how, when, where and why occurred that exceptional transformation from a young medical doctor to

> "... an insuperable soldier; he was an insuperable leader; Che was, from the military point, a man extraordinarily capable; extraordinarily valiant, extraordinarily aggressive ...
> Che was a master of war, Che was an artist of the guerrilla warfare and he demonstrated it an infinity number of times" (p. 27).

There have been lots of investigations about the accelerated and profound transformation of Ernesto Guevara de la Serna. Fidel says that in addition to being a man of profound ideas and a man of action, as revolutionary Che also has

> the virtues that might be defined as the most exact expression of the virtues of a revolutionary: an impeccable- integral man, a man of supreme honesty, of an absolute sincerity, a man of stoic and Spartan life, a man in whom, is practically impossible to find in his conduct a single spot. He constituted by his virtues what we can call a true model of a revolutionary (Guevara, 1988, p. 401).

Che's letters

According to Ricardo Rojo, in Bolivia, in 1953, before a statue of Bolivar, Ernesto Guevara said about the Bolivian revolution, "The question is one of fighting the causes and not just the effects. This revolution is bound to fall if it does not succeed in reaching deep inside, stirring them right down to the bone, and give them back their stature as human beings. Otherwise, what's the use?" (Peterlinz, 2002, p. 2).

The letters which Che writes to his parents, aunt and friends help to assemble a sort of combination of "solitude, momentary disappointments and emerging convictions..." (Guevara, 2004, p. 99). Dated December 10, 1953, in a letter from San José Costa Rica, Che tells to his aunt "I have sworn before a picture of the old and late-lamented Stalin not to rest until I see these capitalist octopuses wiped out. In Guatemala I shall hone myself and do what I have to do to become a true revolutionary" (p. 89).). In a letter to his aunt, dated February 12, 1954, it seems that he was already committed: "I have taken a determined position in support of the Guatemalan government and within it, in the PGT group, which is communist" (p. 94). In a letter to his mother, dated April 1954, Che gives some signs of his Latin Americanism

> ...the Americas will be the theater of my adventurers in a way that is much more significant that I would have believed. I really think I have come to understand her, and I feel Latin American in a way that is different from the way I feel about any other place on earth... (p. 97).

However, later in a letter to his mother, dated May 10, 1954, from Guatemala, he refers his battle inside "the social reformer and the traveler" (p. 91). In the middle of the aggression against the government of Arbenz, Che tries to "sign up as a volunteer to go to the front" without success (p.93). So on June 1954 when Arbenz's government is falling apart he was working in a clinic "My personal situation is more or less this: I'll be expelled from the little hospital where I am now, probably tomorrow, because I have been renamed "Chebol" and the repression is coming" (p. 95).

In spite of the impact of Guatemala's experiences on Che's life, in this note of mid-September 1954 it seems that Che continues trying to find his route: "The first stage of the great adventure has concluded happily, and here I am installed in Mexico, although I have no idea about the future" (pp. 98 and 100). However, in November 1954 he writes to his mother

> Communists don't have your sense of friendship but, among themselves, it is the same or better than yours. I have seen this very clearly and, in the disaster of Guatemala after the government was overthrown and it was every man for himself, the communists remained intact in their faith and comradeship and they constitute the only group that continued working there.
> I think they are worthy of respect and that sooner or later I'll join the party, but what mainly stops me from doing so, for the moment, is that I am mad to travel around Europe and I could not do this if I submitted to such rigorous discipline (p. 101).

Dated the end of 1954, Che writes to his mother "...I can't tell you the precise moment I put reasoning aside and acquired something like faith... as the journey was quite long and there were many backward steps" (p. 103).

In 1956 he says, "This year could be important for my future" (p.110). In June, 1956, from prison in Mexico he writes to his parents that the future "falls in two categories, the mid term and the immediate, as for the mid term, let me tell you know that my future is joined to that of the Cuban revolution. Either triumph with it or die there" (p. 104). And on July 15, still in prison, he writes to his mother "I don't think you would prefer to have a living son who was a Barrabbas rather than a son who died in whatever place doing what he considered his duty" (p. 107). But he adds "... there is no doubt that, after righting the wrongs in Cuba, I will go anywhere at all, and it's also for sure that, locked up in some office of bureaucrats or some clinic of allergic ailments, I'd be fucked" (p. 107). Later on, in October 1956, Che writes to his mother

> I decided to deal with the main things first, to pit myself against the order of things, shield on my arm, the whole fantasy, and then, if the windmills don't break open my head, write more later. Another kiss for you, with all the love of a farewell that still resists being total (p. 110).

In the same month Che writes to his friend Tita Infante

> I am only waiting to see what happens with the revolution; if it works out well, I'm heading for Cuba; if it works out badly, I'll start to look for a country where I can set myself up. This year my life could change drastically... (p. 189).).

Now, Che gives more hints about what he wants to do

In July 1955 Che meets Fidel and Che writes in his diary "one political event is meeting Fidel Castro, the Cuban revolutionary, an intelligent young fellow who is very sure of himself and extraordinarily bold; I think we like each other" (p. 103). Later, Che writes a poem to Fidel that reflects not just his conviction to fight for the Cuban liberation, but his always proved recognition and confidence in Fidel.

> Chant to Fidel (excerpt)
> Let's go,
> Passionate prophet of the aurora,
> Through hidden paths with no wires
> to liberate the green caiman that you love so much
> Lets' go
> defeating offenses with the forehead
> full of Martian's insurrectional stars,
> we oath to achieve the triumph or find the dead...
> (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999d, pp. 9-10).

During the trip to Cuba Che suffers "a strong asthma attack, without medicine, but also with not a single complaint", says Fidel (Che Comandante, Amigo, 1999a, p. 4).

> Maybe that was the first time that I have before me, practically the dilemma between my dedication to medicine or my duty as revolutionary soldier. I had before me a bag full of medicines and a box of bullets. It was too much weight to transport both; I took the box, leaving the bag..." (p.5).

Talking about his aspirations as a medical doctor, Che explains on August 19, 1960 "...I wished for success as every body does, I dreamed of being a famous researcher; I dreamed to work infatigably to get something that

could be at disposition of humanity, ... that would be a personal triumph. I was like every body, a child of the environment" (pp. 2-3-). Che explains that in Guatemala he had started to write notes about the conduct of the revolutionary medical doctor when the democratic government is overthrown "then I realized one fundamental thing: to be a revolutionary medical-doctor, the first thing to achieve is revolution" (p. 3).

Che's revolutionary and pedagogical legacy

Che's pedagogical voice

To the youths

On the closing of the seminar "la Juventud y la Revolución" on May 9, 1964, Che warns . "... do not stop being young, do not convert yourself in theoretical elderly... keep the freshness of youth, the enthusiasm of the youth" (Guevara, 1964a, p. 1).

Defining a communist youth

On October 20, 1962, he says

> Sacrifice, helping others with small duties. Help (him/her) to accomplish his/her work, do his/her homework, to improve in any way. Always be attentive to the surrounding human masses. Besides this, a great spirit of sacrifice not only for the heroic journeys but for every moment...
> The requirement for each communist youth is to be essentially human and to be human to the point that he/she is close to the best of the human, in work, study, exercising solidarity with the people and with all people of the world; that the sensibility develops to the maximum, to feel anguish when a man is assassinated in some corner of the world and to feel enthusiastic when in some corner of the world a new flag of freedom is raised (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999b, pp. 32-33).

To his children

In his last letter to his children Che encourages them to be sensible and to grow up as good revolutionaries. Study hard so that you will have command of the techniques that permit the domination of nature. Above

all, always remain capable of feeling deeply whatever injustice is committed against anyone in any part of the world. This is the finest quality of a revolutionary (Ruiz, 2002, p. 3).

Che's Latin Americanism

On December 11, 1964, in the 19a General Assembly of the United Nations he notes:

> "...No people from Latin America are weak because they are a part of 200 million brothers who suffer the same miseries, keep the same sentiments, have the same enemy; all dream of a better fate and count on the solidarity of all honest men and women of the world. This epopee that we have before us is going to be written by the hungery masses of indigenes, peasants without land, exploited workers. . . .
> ...Now yes, history has to account for the poor of America, with the exploited and humiliated who have decided to start to write of themselves, and forever their history. . . .
> ...Because this great humanity has said enough! and has started to walk, and its giant march will not stop until the conquest of true independence... (pp. 48-49).

On December 12,1964, in the same 19a General Assembly of the United Nations, Che states his Latin American patriotism

> ..I was born in Argentina, it is not a secret for anyone. I am Cuban and I am Argentinean too. If the illustrious seniors of Latin America will not be offended, I feel like a patriot of Latin America, from any country of Latin America... and in the necessary moment I would be able to give my life for the liberation of any of the countries of Latin America, not asking anything, not requiring anything, without exploiting anyone... (p. 49).

However, after Cuba Che knew that the struggle for social liberation in Latin America would be harder and longer. In 1961 he writes

> ...Imperialism has learned deeply the lesson of Cuba, and it will not be taken by surprise again in any of our twenty republics... the great popular struggles against powerful army forces of invasion are waiting for those who decide to violate the peace of the tombs, the Roman peace ... infinitely harder will be the new battles that await the people in other parts of Latin America (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999c, p. 45).

Che follows the spirit of El Libertador, Simon Bolivar, who on August 5, 1826, in the Pan-American Congress of Panama, denounced "the United States seems to be destined ... to plague the America of miseries in the name of freedom" (p.7).

The American dream of Che Guevara is shared by other revolutionaries such as Commander Augusto Turcios Lima, of the FAR (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias from Guatemala, who, in the same Tricontinental Conference confirms "There can not be guarantee of peace while our countries development struggles without end against their oppressors, while the main enemy of humanity, imperialism, has been not be defeated totally and for ever" (p.5). Turcios Lima dies in a car accident on October 12, 1966 in Guatemala.

Regarding the dialectical interaction between the fight in Latin America and the possibilities of the people of the United States, Fidel explains

> But only the revolutionary transformation of Latin America will allow the people of the United States to face their own accounts with that same imperialism. Besides, in the same measure, the increasing struggle of the North American people against the imperialistic politic could convert (the USA people) into a decisive ally of the revolutionary movement in Latin América (Guevara, 1988, p. XXII).

Che's internationalism and antimperialism

Che's words did not contain a crumb of rhetoric. From April 24 to November 21 Che and 370 Cubans went to help the revolutionaries of Congo. On October 3, 1965, the Cuban government published the farewell letter that Che had given to Fidel on April 10, 1965:

> ...One day we were asked to whom should they give notice in case of our death and the real possibility of this fact impacted everybody. After, we knew that it was certain, that in a revolution there is triumph or death...
> ...Other lands of the world claim the concourse of my modest efforts. I am able to do things that you are not allowed to do because of your responsibility leading Cuba and the time for us to separate has come...
> ...In the new battle fields I will take along the faith that you taught me, the revolutionary spirit of my people, the sensation of accomplishing the

> most sacred of duties: to fight imperialism in any place; this compensates and cures plenty any pain (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999b, p. 60).

My own being and commitment vibrates when I read the following exerpt from a letter to his parents, in Mid -1965

> Once again I feel between my heels the ribs of Rosinante; once more I must hit the road with my shield upon my arm...I believe in armed struggle as the only solution for those people who fight to free themselves, and I am consistent with my belief. Many will call me an adventurer, and I am, only one of a different sort: one of those who risks his skin to prove his platitudes. It is possible this may be the finish. I don't seek it, but it's within the realm of probabilities (Ruiz, 2002, p. 3).

In his message to the Tricontinental Conference in Havana in 1966 Che explains his broad concept of internationalism

> ... the flag under which one fights is the sacred cause of the redemption of humanity, so in any case, to die under the flag of Viet Nam, of Venezuela, of Guatemala, of Laos, of Guinea, of Colombia, of Bolivia...to cite just the current sceneries of armed struggle, be equally glorious and desirable for an American, an Asian, an African and an European... And each people that it liberates is a phase of the battle... which has been won (Guevara, 1988, p. XIX).

In this message, Che also reiterates his disposition to fight imperialism:

> ...all our action is a war shout against Imperialism. In any place where death surprises us it is welcomed, because of the fact that our war shout has been caught by a receptive ear and another hand extends to hold our weapons" (Guevara, 1988, p. XV).

When internationalism is put aside, imperialism takes advantage. In fact, "Proletarian internationalism is a duty but is also a revolutionary need" (Guevara, 1965, p. 10). Che states the international character of imperialism

> ... Beasts were the Hitler herds, as beasts are North America today, as beasts are the Belgium parachutes, as beasts are French imperialists in Argel, because it is the nature of imperialism which bestializes humans... ... Under the flag of the United Nations in Congo, Patrice Lumumba was assassinated. And those were the United Nations that the North Americans wanted to inspect our territory, the same United Nations! (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999b, p. 42).

Che's Marxist analyses

Emphasizing the historical role of the working class

On January 23, 1963 at a parade of Cuban Central of Workers, Che affirms "The working class has a fundamental mission: to lead the construction of socialism, to develop the maximum possibilities of our state ... (Che Comandante, Amigo, 1999b, p. 36.

Che against dogma

In the late 1980s and early 1990s the socialist countries of Eastern Europe fell as a result of their internal conflicts and inconsistencies. The dialectical content of Marxism was restrained by "social determinism and officialism," Borrego (2001, p. 5) contended. Che Guevara, for example, considered that the economical model of the former Soviet Union "was fixed by an iron determinism that he was not able to accept" (p. 6). He fought this dogma from the philosophy of praxis. Thus, Che (as cited in Borrego) stated:

> Man in the socialist society would convert himself, because of the development of his consciousness as the true maker of his achievement as a human being, and not through the mechanisms of the capitalist market which has been penetrating the socialist economy, hybridizing the "cellular" organism of the whole system. (p. 6)

Che argued that it was possible to create no market socialism in an underdeveloped country. Others believed that it was not possible because the powerful impulse of productive powers would not allow that. Che counter argued that with socialism people are able to consciously conduct economical processes through planning and modern techniques of direction. It is possible that within some "situations, the relations of production are more advanced than the productive forces" (p. 6)

Che's explanation of disalienation of work and man

About the effects of the laws of capitalism, Che says that these act on the individual and are invisible to common people. The law of value, for instance, "acts in all aspects of life, modeling its track and fate" (Guevara, 1965, p. 3).

The individual within the context of the building of socialism presents a duality; as a unique being and as a member of society. The first thing is "to recognize his/her quality as not a finished product. The miasma of the past moves to the present in the individual conscience, and a permanent work has to be made to eradicate it" (p. 3). There is a double effect. On one hand "the society acts through its direct and indirect education" and on the other hand "the individual submits him/herself to a conscious process of self education" (p. 3). Che alerts us to the risks of people diminishing consciousness during the process of building socialism. "Battling the chimera of achieving socialism with the dull weapons inherited by capitalism (the goods as economical cell, profitability, the individual - material interest as wedge, etc.)" (p. 4). Che emphasizes "It is important to correctly choose the instrument to mobilize the masses. This instrument must be of a moral kind, fundamental, without forgetting the correct use of material stimulus, mainly of a social nature" (p.4). It is important how "men are acquiring, each day, consciousness of the need of their incorporation into society and, at the same time, of their importance as engines of said society" (p.5). The last and most important revolutionary ambition is to see a free man liberated from alienation (p.5). Che adds that

> A man begins to liberate his thinking from the same fact that implies the need to satisfy his animal needs through work. He starts to see himself in his own work and to understand its human transcendence through the created object, of the work done. It no longer implies leaving a part of his being in sold labor, which not longer belongs to him, but it means an emanation of himself, a contribution to the common life within which the accomplishment of his social duty is reflected (p.6)

Che explains that this social duty joined to the development of technique will trigger conditions to achieve greater freedom. Voluntary work, "based on the Marxist consideration that man achieves his full human condition when he produces without the compulsion of the physical need to sell himself as merchandise" (p.6). However, there will remain some compulsion; there will be lack of complete spiritual recreation because the change in consciousness is not

automatic, just as it is not in the economy (p. 6). Che clarifies that the construction of socialism is full of violent class struggles and elements of capitalism remain. (p.6). At this point, Che urges study of the characteristics of this period of transition as a premise to formulate an economical and political theory. This theory will favor two pillars of the construction of socialism: "the formation of the new man and the development of technique" (p. 6) not to proceed blindly but to follow the track "opened by the more advanced countries in the world" (p.6).

It is not apolitical in technique

Che discusses the argument of the apoliticity of technique. In summary, technology can be useful for domesticating people, and to help people toward their liberation (Guevara, 1963, p. 2). However, "to put the weapon of technique at the service of society, society must be held in hand, and to do this the factors of oppression must be destroyed" (p.2). Che continues:

> Who wants to say that a technician, an architect, a medical doctor, an engineer, a scientist of any field is only to work with his instruments, only in his specific field, while his people are dying of hunger or in the struggle. In fact he has then taken a position for the other party. He is not thenapolitical; he is political but contrary to the liberation movements (p. 2).

At the end of this article Che points out the challenge of participating in the struggle for social liberation:

> You, students of the world, do not ever forget that behind each technique, there is somebody who is grabbing it, and that this somebody is a society... And that in the world there are those who think that exploitation is good and those who think that exploitation is bad and must be stopped. Even when one is not talking about politics, the political man can not give up his condition as a human being. Technique is a weapon, and whoever feels that the world is not aas perfect as it should be, must fight to make the weapon of technique work in favor of the society, ... in order that all technique be useful to the majority of human beings, and that we are able to build the society of the future... (p. 4).

About the importance of theory

Che points out that

> to invent a theory totally based on an action... is craziness. With that one does not arrive to anything. And there is elaborate theory by people who have had real, amazing ability, because the ability that Marx had to discover the relations of production is something really amazing for that time, and the capacity of Lenin to systematize all that, to bring it up to the practice is also something enormously relevant (Kohan, 2005, p.9).

Che's pedagogy of example

One of the main virtues of Che was to teach through example. This means to do first what one asks others to do

> In our ambition as revolutionaries, we try to walk as soon as possible, opening tracks, but we know that we have to nurture from the masse and that this will advance faster if we feed it with our example (Guevara, 1965, p. 5).

Che's conception of the qualities of revolutionary leaders

Che insists on fulfilling his responsibility to accomplish his duties, an attitude that denotes "the man of the future" (p. 1). Also there is his total dedication to the revolutionary cause; an "heroic attitude that must be perpetuated" in daily life (p. 1).

On April 28, 1959, in a debate on television, Che talks about the interrelationship between the leaders of the Revolution and the Cuban people

> ...the leaders and the great masse are learning and influencing each other. And when those leaders are permeable to the critic, people are much more capable of learning all things that are taught to them. The people always are able to learn what is taught to them and always are able to fight for just causes (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999b, p. 12).

About the recognition and confidence of people in Fidel, Che says that Fidel has earned their confidence because he interprets "exactly the desires of people, their aspirations, and their sincere struggle to accomplish the commitments" the leader has made (Guevara, 1965, p. 2). In this matter

measures are needed that make a sensible and structured connection with the masses (p.2). This means a firm "dialectical unity between the individual and the masse, where both interrelate themselves, and, besides, the masse, as a group of individuals, interrelates with the leaders" (p.2).

Accordingly, Che visualizes the same pedagogy of example within the party:

> The Party is a live example; its cadres dictate a model of labor and sacrifice... at the culmination of the revolutionary task, it means years of hard struggle against the difficulties of construction, class enemies, the miseries of the past, and imperialism (p.9).

Che formulates that "leaders must accomplish their role as vanguard; in a true revolution to which all is given, and from which no material reward is expected, the task of the revolutionary of vanguard is both great and anguished" (9). And going to the people, Che states that revolutionary leaders should not go to teach others, "but to demonstrate that we are going to learn with the people... We have to go with an investigative desire, with a humble spirit, to learn from the great fountain of wisdom of the people" (Guevara, 1960, p. 2).

Che clarifies any doubts about the nature of the revolutionaries:

> Let me tell you, in spite of the risk of looking ridiculous, the true revolutionary is guided by great sentiments of love. It is impossible to think of a revolutionary without this quality. . . .
>
> In these conditions there has to be a great dose of humanity, a great dose of the meaning of justice and truth to avoid falling on cold scholasticism, in isolation from the masses. Every day we have to fight to make this love for humanity convert itself into concrete facts, into acts useful as models and mobilization. (Guevara, 1965, p. 9).

The revolutionary, adds Che, spends his/her life in those actions never interrupted except by death, unless the construction of socialism is achieved worldwide (p. 9).

Children of revolutionary leaders "must have and must lack the same things as the children of the common man; and our families must understand

this... The revolution is made through man, but the man must forge daily his revolutionary spirit" (p. 10). As a result there are individuals who have forged "the consciousness of what is necessary; men who struggle to leave the reign of necessity and to come to the reign of liberty" (p. 10).

Che insists on the exemplar attitude of communists about their work as constructors of the new society: "The communist attitude before life is to show with example the path that must be followed" (Guevara, 1964b. p. 1). This means to lead the masses by example, facing any difficulties in the construction of the new society, a mission that only can be achieved "on the base of sacrifice" (p. 1).

Che's conception of the new man

Che explains with pristine clarity:

> ...The man of the XXI century is the one that we must create, though it still is a subjective aspiration and not systematized yet...
> The possibilities to have exceptional artists will depend on wider field of culture and the possibility of expression,
> ...Youth is the malleable clay to build the new man ...
> ...Their education is more and more complete and we do not forget its integration into the work from the beginning... Work is an award in some cases, a tool for education in other cases, but never a punishment" (Guevara, 1965, p. 8).

And there is no material compensation for the sacrifice of revolutionary leaders:

> We, leaders, know that we have to pay a price to have the right to say that we are leading the people who are leading America. All and every one of us pays punctually his/her installment of sacrifice, conscious of receiving the prize of satisfaction for accomplished duty... (p. 10).

The meaning of socialism is stressed by Che: "Socialism is not just to produce beautiful factories, but for the integrity of man" (Guevara, 1964a, p. 1). Besides the progress of production, man has to transform himself. The

production of only goods and rough materials and not production of men would be a deformation (pp. 1-2).

Others' interpretation of Che's legacy

"Really, Che was a man out of our century, he was the paradigm of future generations" says Julio Chaviano (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999b, p. 40). Che was an infatigable student that "demanded of all of us that we study... he used to say that we must prepare ourselves", adds Chaviano (p. 41). In addition, "his austerity was a reason for his existence. Through his personality, projection and humanism... he did most naturally all those things that he used to order' (p. 41). However he was "implacable with someone who wanted to take advantage of his/her position to live comfortably" (p. 41).

"He had discipline, he demanded discipline, he did not conceal wrong doing. For me he was one of the men that one must respect ..." says Eduardo Fernández (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999a, p. 20). Che's sense of fairness is stressed by Israel Chávez "... in Che there was something very special: his concept of equity that he not only used to teach but he used to practice. For Che nobody was different, all men were equals," adds Israel Chávez (p. 24).

Elsa Blaquier, widow of José María Martínez Tamayo (Papi o Ricardo) who fell in combat on July 30, 1967 in Bolivia, says that Che is present in the world today because

> ...of the purity of his ideals, of the strength of his way of being, of his integrity...; he was a man strict in his beliefs, very strict in the sense giving all that is possible as a human being in work, and also in the formation of the new being he dreamed of. Then, we have the great example of a dignified man, of a pure man, of a man sacrificed to the extreme" (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999c, p. 15).

Rodolfo Saldaña, a Bolivian who participated in the organization of the urban nests of guerrillas, affirms that Che's life "will remain an example, a valid presence in the existence of the enormous masse, of the majority of population, of all humanity as a totality..." (p. 44).

On October 8, 1972, to commemorate the 5th anniversary of Che's death, the Revolutionary Commander Ramiro Valdez declared

> ... Che represented a revolutionary principle of a superior nature, Che represented Latin Americanism, and Che represented internationalism. ...How great will be the example of Che, his ideas, his identification with the cause...for the formation of all our people within the principles of internationalism and militant solidarity (p. 74).
> ...the model that Che forged of his own life constitutes one practical example ... of revolutionary virtues, of communist and internationalist spirit, of combatant spirit... of leadership ability and profound human sensibility (p. 75).
> ... Che was a product of the revolutionary struggle that chooses and places the most capable men in leadership positions (p.75). He was always willing to give the maximum of himself to achieve the necessary tasks (75).
> ...Che stressed the need to give the maximum development to conscience factors, to moral values, to communist ideals (p. 75).
> ... The example of Che has come for ever into the heart of the peoples of the continent; it has become the flag of all men who fight against imperialism and exploitation (p. 77).

Thre is no doubt that Che's example impacts others. In this respect, Fidel reflects "The men who act as Che, the men who make all and give all for the cause of the humble, every day they become giants, every day they come into the heart of the people" (p. 77).

Fidel describes Che as "... an extraordinary man with extraordinary sensibility (Guevara, 1988, p. 401). Because "...he was capable of conjugating in his personality not only the characteristics of a man of action, but also a man of thinking, a man of immaculate revolutionary virtues and of extraordinary human sensibility" all these qualities "joined to an iron character, to a still will, and to a indomitable tenacity" (p. 401). Che was a revolutionary communist, "true communist who had an infinite faith in moral values, and a infinite faith in the consciousness of men" (p.403).

> If we want to express how we wish our revolutionary combatants, our militants, our men would be, we must say with no hesitation of any kind:

> that they be like Che! If we want to say how we desire our children would be educated, we must say with no hesitation: We want that they be educated in the spirit of Che. If we want a model of man, a model of man who does not belong to this time, a model of man who belongs to the future, with my heart I say that this model without any spot in its conduct, without any spot in its actuation, that model is Che! If we want to express how we desire our children should be, we must say, with all our heart as vehement revolutionaries: We want that they be like Che (p.403).

In summary, "Ernesto Guevara, was perhaps the most authentic of world citizens", says Tita Infante (Guevara, 2004 p. 195).

Closing

There are efforts to recuperate Che's thinking "as a part of the recreation of the antimperialistic and anticapitalistic culture in our society" (Kohan 2005, p. 2). In this matter, what really counts is to transcend academicist deliberation, to study Che Guevara in organic relationship with "social movements and collective knowledge that would be useful in the long term as a tool of combat" (p. 2). Even more, "The revolutionary experience, struggle and social redemption, dreams and projects of liberty within Marxism, through many generations worldwide, should not be thrown away" (p. 5).

In fact, "Political formation is the political-pedagogical instrument destined to build collectively that anticapitalist and antimperialist farther, from the just economical reconfigurations, but always within the social movement" (p.12). Just theorizing without praxis is irrelevant.

What Kohan (2005) calls the "Pedagogy of example of Che Guevara" means that Che's "life and political thinking bounded all the necessary Marxist readings, all the theoretical study of the classical (Marxism), including the collective study of *El Capital*... besides the importance of morals, values and the daily example" (Kohan p.12). In other words, "...The Marxist thinking of Che constitutes a synthesis of the extended antimperialist history of our America and

the best of the European heterodox Marxism. It united both traditions by a point of view both humanistic and radical" (p. 14).

We need Che's clarity and optimism

The description by Che of the "expansion of capitalism as essentially a relation of political power" (Petras, 2003, p. 1) is unlikely for current theoreticians of globalization, who describe the expansion of capitalism as "a universal process, impersonal, irreversible because it is the product of economical structures" (p. 1).

For Che, imperialism is "a social and political relation between classes and states; hence [this relation is] subject to transformation" (Petras, 2003, p. 2). For globalists, globalization is "an objective structure that expands through its internal logic and that, consequently, eliminates any transformative political or social action" (p. 2).

> Che conceptualizes imperialism as a historical/contradictory phenomena whose expansion creates national and class conflicts that conduce its decline. In contrast, globalists have a linear conception of capitalist expansion that results in its consolidation in a new world order. (p. 2)

For Che when the socio-economic relations of exploitation are in its place, human subjectivity is determinant of the social order and economical system (Petras, 2003, p. 2). For legalistic thinkers, "the economical structures continue dominating subjectivity, leaving little room for social action" (p. 2).

Che's eternal presence

Among thousands of speeches, poems and songs to honor Che, Nicolas Guillén's poem "Che Comandante", written in October 15, 1969, after Fidel confirmed Che's death:

Che Comandante	**Che Commander**
No porque hayas caído	Not because you have fallen
tu luz es menos alta...	is your light less brilliant ...

Estás en todas partes. En el indio	You are every where. In the
hecho de sueño y cobre. Y en el negro	Indian made of dreams and copper.
revuelto en espumosa muchedumbre,	And in the blacks wrapped
y en el ser petrolero y salitrero,	in the foaming crowd, and in the petroleum workers
Y en el terrible desamparo	and salt miners, and in the
de la banana, y en la gran pampa	terrible isolation of the
de las pieles,	banana plantation, and in the great flatlands of the furs,
y en el azúcar y en la sal	and in the sugar and in the salt
y en los cafetos	and in the coffee fields
Firme la voz que ordena sin mandar	Firm is the voice that orders without commands
Tierna y dura de jefe camarada...	Tender and hard the leader comrade...
Y puro como un niño	And pure like a child
o como un hombre puro.	or like a pure man.

(Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999d, pp. 1-2).

Eduardo Galeano says

> Could it be that Che used to say what he used to think, and used to do what he used to say? Could it be that for this he is still being extraordinary, in a world where the words and facts barely meet themselves and when they meet they do not greet themselves, because they do not know each other? (Che, Comandante, Amigo, 1999d, p. 9).

And Saramago notes

> Che Guevara, if it is possible to say, already existed before he was born. Che Guevara, if it is possible to say, will continue existing after he is dead. Because Che Guevara is just the other name of the most fair and dignified (aspects) in the human spirit – that many times live sleeping within us. We must awaken it to know and to know ourselves... (Saramago, 2003, p. 2).

Closing of chapter nine

> In our case, direct education acquires a much greater importance. Its explanation is convincing because it is true: it does not require subterfuges. (Che Guevara)

The revolutionaries in the power struggle may fail in their attempt to govern. Because they have no expertise in these issues, the negative consequences that their lack of experience may provoke are not intentional. These are qualitative differences that need to be stressed before we become manipulated by the imminent war of reactionary propaganda against revolutionary governments.

It is not a matter of revenge or turning into one's opposite: The oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity (which is a way to create it), become in turn oppressors of the oppressors. Instead, the aim should be to become restorers of the humanity of both (Freire; as cited in Araujo Freire & Macedo, 1998, p. 280). After a revolutionary movement takes power, it tries hard to persuade the former dominant classes to accept and participate in the construction of the new society. There is a need to convince the former oppressed to participate, or at least to neutralize their contribution to the regressive forces. In this point I prefer to use *convince* rather than *convert*. The first better describes the reality of social classes and the struggle of classes present through the whole process. The second sounds religious and naïve—two qualities that do not fit into the nature of a serious revolutionary process.

In terms of endurance, the revolutionary process is prolonged. We can consider four phases related to taking power, keeping it, and building revolutionary power: first, the period before taking power (accumulation of political, organic, and ideological strengths); second, struggling to take power (from initial actions and developing strategies for the fundamental goals to the decisive battles for taking the power); third, taking power, and fourth, after taking power (defending it subsequently and building the new popular and revolutionary power).

Pedagogy of the oppressed is just a part of one huge area of the revolutionary work. Through the different moments of the process, this pedagogy is a very important resource for the politicization and conscientization

of people. It is not just a literacy campaign, but the definition and role of an education for freedom.

However, we cannot take pedagogy of the oppressed as the only revolutionary method to organize and conscientícize people. There are other methods, some of general application, others applicable to social sectors, workplace, community, and so on. Like theology for liberation, there is a moment when people ask, "Okay, we can build heaven in the Earth, but now what are we doing?" Or

> Yes, I know now how to read the world and the word; I know my position and potentialities to become a transformer of the economical and political structures of this reality and to become constructor of the new society—socialism. But what is next in the process of concretizing it?

There are many practical and theoretical aspects to be identified throughout the process. One is that the movement cannot be leaderless. This ensures that the process will move in the right direction, which means in this context "the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed is to liberate themselves" (Freire; as cited in Araujo & Macedo, 1998, p. 46). Without a firm revolutionary organization, there can be no total and true liberation.

In the revolutionary experience concepts such us "oppressed" can be used to mean the exploited and those who suffer any kind of oppression—political, diplomatic, economical, military, and ideological. However, this diverse "grouping" tends to obscure the existence and conflict of social classes. In fact, there are the *proletariats*—those who transform the raw materials into goods. They receive a salary for their work, which becomes itself a commodity. The salary they receive is less than the real value of the commodity they produce. That surplus that capitalists do not pay is the surplus value, which essentially is wealth. There are other workers in service who receive insufficient salaries but do not produce commodities - the poor *campesinos*, the homeless, minorities, and so on. I still think that the proletariat has more possibilities, as a social category because of its fundamental role in the social relations of

production...The concept "oppressed" must not be used to deny the essence of social classes and their struggle.

There is no doubt that socialism has the potential for humanization. Revolutionaries love life; they are defenders of lives. The fight for liberation "will actually constitute an act of love," according to Freire (as cited in Araujo & Macedo, 1998, p. 47). Or as Che says "Let me tell you, in spite of the risk of looking ridiculous, the true revolutionary is guided by great sentiments of love. It is impossible to think of a revolutionary without this quality..." (Guevara, 1965, p. 9).

Both Freire and Che can help us to work in the process of formation of human beings, but with Che we will learn in the real context. This means the real process of eradicating an old society and building the new, the socialist one. Both revolutionaries are critical of the current social reality and both call to change it, to revolutionize it. There are worldwide workers, campesinos, employees, students, teachers and many oppressed, exploited and repressed people who have receptive ears and who are extending their hands to hold their respective weapons. Freire did his best in the Ministery of Education of Sao Paulo. Che did his best in Cuba as one of its leaders for five years and three months. The Cuban systems of Education and Health Care, two of the countries main priorities, are recognized worldwide. In Brazil, the government of Lula has not yet shown that education is a priority.

Education is a rocket to propel revolution, both before and after taking power. However this possibility is given within the context of a revolutionary process through the concourse of organic, political, social, ideological, cultural and other components. Critical pedagogy or what I call "pedagogy of liberation" may have the potential of impredecible and positive consequences in favour of the cause of people's liberation, but is only within the context of the ongoing revolution will education and pedagogy will fullfil its potentialities.

CHAPTER TEN:
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

It has not been easy to be a militant and a teacher first and then, based on my political activism and teaching experience, to try to formulate a theory that accommodates my dual condition. First, as a militant I have fought to create a better world with a perspective towards socialism. Second, as a teacher I think that teaching is a career based on love, that education must be for all children and it has a role to play in changing society.

Personally, I have tried to justify my choice of Marxism and Leninism as guides to interpreting and acting to transform the world. I have learned about the deficiencies of the former socialism in Eastern Europe; however, these deficiencies did not delegitimize Marxism and Leninism.

I have also learned about the moral integrity of Ernesto Che Guevara, whose praxis (theory and practice) is boosted by passion and love for others. Moreover, I found that Che and Freire have many things in common in terms of pedagogy.

In the first days and months of this research I perceived neoliberal globalization as something too huge to address, with too many advanced positions. Now I have found that, yes, there is an alternative to neoliberalism: socialism. In this respect I have established my commitment.

As a researcher I have reestablished my confidence in the strengths of people; my love for others is 'in place,' and my optimism boosts my vision that the power of unipolar US imperialism is not overwhelming, eternal, or infallible. I am clear that this immense power will not fall by itself; it needs to be pulled, pushed, and shaken. Yes, a better world is possible, but we must create it. The doors are open.

After the fall of the Soviet Union and the supposed collapse of Marxism (chanted by ideologists worldwide) popular forces, including the socialists, felt immobilized. Some adopted social democrat and even neoliberal positions. Scepticism and disillusion abounded, and the revolutionary struggles decreased in number and capacity. Some were defeated; others negotiated unfavourably. The few revolutionary organizations that maintained revolutionary political projects faced great difficulties (Carmona, 2003, p. 12).

The revolutionary forces were in a period of ebb and tide. Throughout the world were low levels of revolutionary organization and within those that endured dispersion and absence of revolutionary perspective dominated. The situation of the balance of forces in the world was completely favourable to the reactionary and imperialist forces and unfavourable to the revolutionary and progressive forces. However, "these are objective reasons, and I am sure that humanity will put in all the indispensable subjective parts" (Castro, 1999, p. 7).

Essentially, this unbalanced situation did not change with diversity in the social arena. In fact, there were

> anarchists, feminists, religious, ecologists, etc. But many of them joined to conceptions such as "The Third Way.". . . Maybe because they were not "realist" enough to deviate from the dominant discourse, they did not formulate a unitarian possibility and, of course, few of them called themselves "antiglobalization." (Carmona, 2003, p. 12).

Conclusions

Capitalism has crossed different stages, from mercantile capitalism from the 14th to the 16th century in Europe, manufacturing capitalism in the 17th and 18th centuries, industrial capitalism in the 19th and 20th centuries, to "technoscientistic" capitalism in the 21st century (Beaud (2001, p. 306). Capitalism is "a complex social logic, able to transform the world around it and at the same time to transform itself" (Beaud, 2001, p. 5) whose exploitative and depredatory nature must be stressed. Furthermore, for Marxism, abolishing

capitalism is a possibility motivated by the aspiration of a better world in which to live.

In other words, Marxism does not just interpret capitalism, but, with no subterfuges of any kind, it also openly tries to raise the consciousness of the exploited and oppressed on the need for and possibility of emancipation through revolutionary actions (Sánchez Vásquez, 2004, p. 3). These great revolutionary goals can not be achieved just theorizing but the Marxist combination of theory and practice (praxis).This is not a religious call, but a revolutionary and Marxist perspective.

I vow that I cannot and do not want to separate the man, the teacher, the poet, and the scholar from the insurgent, the dreamer, and the builder. This is my perception of myself: full of feelings, thoughts, and knowledge that make sense in my actions towards another.

The Marxist interpretation of my dreams presents them as the "ideal communist," as clarified by the philosophy (of Marxism), as a principle to solve current contradictions, and not as a 'model of perfection.' Therefore there will be no margin for misinterpretation when I call these goals of social liberation 'dreams' or when I say, ' fight for the society of which I have dreamt.'

Personal memories of past exploitation and oppression are relevant only if they connect to and join forces with others' memories. It was not my intention to feel sorrow or, as a masochist, to recall memories that hurt. Instead, I want to regain consciousness, accumulate strength, prepare the means, and ride my Rocinante.

Writing this dissertation was a moral obligation to "all men and women of the planet who dream of something better for the future" (Borrego, 2001, p. 9). One of the great motivations of a Marxist is to fight for political rights within a socialist democracy, one that is incompatible with the exploitation of human beings by others human beings. "While there still exists an enormous inequality between men, there is not and cannot exist democracy" (Castro, 2004, p. 2).

Before beginning this research, I must confess that when I heard the arrogant voices of oppressors, I was afraid. I must confess that when I read the pessimism of the new fashions of idealism, I was confused. After this journey,

> I am no longer anguishing about what is going on in the crazy world.
> I am reviving pieces of my being which I had lost in that ideological chaos.
> I am no longer disillusioned, disengaged, and frustrated.
> I am regaining consciousness, and I am going to the praxis, which means acting accordingly. . . .

I have gained awareness of the changes in contemporary capitalism, neoliberal globalization, and imperialism. The strategic importance of these changes, the essential conditions that remain, and their dialectical interrelation are basic to determining the nature of the struggle, the strategy to follow, and the program to develop.

I certainly have learned that imperialism has many forms, but all forms pursue similar goals: "the conquest of the Third World markets, the penetration of competitor economies and the protection of home market" (Petras, 2001b, p. 6). The imperial state is more than an economic institution. In fact, "the overseas expansion of the MNCs (Multinational Corporations) is heavily dependent on the military and political role of the imperial state" (p. 7).

Being revolutionary, Marxist, defender and promoter of socialism, helps me to resolve the challenge of change creatively. The revolutionary theory is strategic, but it needs to be engaged through practice: hence praxis. To change does not mean erasing my beliefs. Capitalism, neoliberal globalization, and imperialism are powerful, but not omnipotent or invincible or eternal. Thus they can be fought and defeated. I am not changing my will to fight and my confidence in the potential and real power of people, because I firmly believe that

> There is a place and there are tasks for everybody.
> And everybody has their own instrument:
> A pen, a brush, a blackboard, a stethoscope, a computer, a machete. . . .

And everybody may be located in his/her own trench
(And the trench may be on the streets, on the country side,
in the school—everywhere).

Let me do my best. I am confident that you will do yours.
The most generous mission is pending. . . .
Love towards others is calling. . . .

My Self responds or is a product of a context or situation

The history of five generations started with a poor girl who was seduced by a typical "macho" *de casa rica* (of a wealthy house). My grandmother was the girl of 13 years who was married to steal her patrimony; she lived in eternal sadness. My mom was a beautiful 15 year old girl whose adolescence was assaulted. She lives with chronic frustration that makes her hurt her children and grandchildren. My brothers and I inherited the miseries that come with a lack of childhood. Our children are making their own lives and I perceive signs that worry me, but it is too early to conclude... One day the quilt of our lives will be continued and maybe the colors of happiness and hope will predominate.

Regarding myself, those days of living in the 3 x 3 room seem distant. However, they are part of my memories related to the genuine willingness to serve others in my best way: teaching is one of these ways.

My autobiography is neither complete nor definitive. I did not expect to finish the biography or the study of Che. This is a titanic and permanent job. From Freire I took a number of his theoretical points to reflect on to support my own conception of a pedagogy of social liberation. In biographical and autobiographical terms, these are the modest expectations of this dissertation.

But, since I still believe that dreams and dreamers not only give sense to life, but also provide hope for defeating injustice and oppression everywhere I keep alive a Quixotic flame in my soul. Yes, I know that the giants are not windmills, but enormous, corporate hydras of many heads that isolate the whole world; mercilessly killing people, animals, and plants; drying their water; and poisoning their air. This is enough reason to keep alive my flame, prepare my

tools, and, after a while, act according to my conscience!

The location of this statement is the world because I want to be a patriot without borders. So lets me ride my Rocinante...

Las huellas	***The traces***
Pasamos por la vida,	We pass through life
muchas veces sin saber	many times ignoring
de las huellas que deja.	the traces that are left.
La vida es un hecho de amor	Life is a product of love,
y, para bien o para mal,	and for good or evil,
todo hecho de amor	all acts of love leave traces
deja sus huellas	

Fraternally,

A teacher, a poet, a dreamer
who believes that it is worthy to fight for dreams.

I am somebody who believes that my academic aspirations must be related to those dreams of social liberation.
One who loves consequently, and pays for it.

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APPENDIX 1: MANIFESTO

Los sueños de hoy serán las realidades de mañana.
(José Martí; as cited in Castro, 1999, p. 57)

The dreams of today will be the realities of tomorrow.

I am not preaching; I am not standing in a pulpit. I am not promoting the glory of eternity. I am not begging. I am sharing a genuine and authentic dream of emancipation, understood as social liberation: a revolution that transforms all the ways of life. I am simply telling others that it is not too late—never too late—to embrace this dream.

I am exercising the right to speak out for justice. How could I not? Who are you that you cannot hear this clamour?

1 A Letter to Former Militants Living in Exile: What Happened to Our Dreams of Social Liberation?

Es la hora de los hornos y no se ha de ver más que la luz. (José Martí)

The refugee program that took us to an adoptive country works very well! The exiles from past times commonly return to the native country to restart life there. The motherland is still calling us, and nostalgia comes to us in waves; however, we just visit it. What happened to our dreams of liberation?
I am not criticizing or judging why we have not returned. There are reasons that have been mentioned: children and grandchildren who are not returning, lack of resources to restart life there, and so on. Thus, we are here.

And being here for 5, 10, and more years has destroyed or considerably diminished our praxis (political theorization and practice). This absence or diminishing is very noticeable if we consider our important participation in the past in our native country. Our praxis was created by a high level of

consciousness of our presence and our role in reality. In fact, we wanted to change that unjust reality, and we wanted to build a new society focused on socialism. There is no doubt that our dreams were generous and full of love for the exploited and repressed!

That dream of social liberation is still there. Some changes have occurred in that reality, but these are not the changes that we wanted either in quantity or in quality. Some of us we are still collaborating with a party, a church, a community from our native country. Some of us are not doing anything. But both those who do something and those who do not have something in common. We do not realize that

1. We came to an adoptive country for a while - to save our lives, to keep our family safe, to take a break from the repression. These are very fair reasons to come.
2. But the time irreversibly passes, and we are still here.
3. And being here, it is time to realize that our condition as revolutionaries transcends the boundaries of the country where we were born, especially the place where we are living now.

"But we cannot participate in this country." Why not? First, we are revolutionaries who are not tied by frontiers; and second, the conditions for struggle must be examined.

Objective and Subjective Conditions

Exploitation and Oppression Are Here; The Effects of Capitalism Are Here: What Are We Waiting For?

If we are living in a rich and developed capitalist country whose productive forces are developed and whose natural resources are immense, inhabitants probably enjoy a higher level of life than do people who live in an underdeveloped country. Nevertheless, democracy and equality within the country is a myth in terms of distribution of wealth and satisfaction of needs. Thus, objective conditions are present: hunger, poverty, unemployment, and lack of housing, clothing, entertainment, and cultural access.

These cruel effects of capitalism have been worsening through neoliberal measures but still are less dramatic than in the Third World. Reformism and some political liberties help to hide exploitation and oppression. As a result, there is a level and a style of life of the population that is not comparable with the lower level experienced in the poor countries. The working class is unarguably exploited (because the salary that workers receive does not correspond with the real value of the goods they produce—*surplus-value*—as the generator of capital). Does their salary cover the workers' needs? Probably not, but all the comforts of the system alleviate the impact of deprivation. Also the role of unions, whose practice is fuelled by legalism and economicism, is to favour the interests and needs of the employees. In this way, many unions contribute to submission.

Ideologically, schools achieve their mandate to domesticate people. Media and propaganda contribute.

Within neoliberal globalization, governments of different colours and flags have been destroying education, health care, and the social networks that protect children, women, and elders. These governments have substantially cut budgets or privatized programs. Worse, right-wing leadership does not hide its plan to severely cut funding to maintain these programs; they do not hide their intention to destroy unemployment insurance.

With all of these openly regressive policies, we have difficulty finding a political alternative whose mandate is to support and defend these social programs. There is a mosaic of organizations: unions (most of them defused and powerless - and doing nothing in favour of workers), antiracists, antiwar protestors, antiglobalizationists, environmentalists, advocates for women's rights and gays and lesbians, animal and nature protectionists, and so on. Every organization pursues its own fight and agenda. Obviously, there is no anticapitalist or anti-imperialist program, based on an integral strategy free from legalism, reformism, and economicism. However, there are economical, political, and social demands that must be included in any truly revolutionary program:

- Poverty, hunger, and deprivation of vital needs (housing, clothing, entertainment) suffered by some social sectors have to be overcome.
- Unemployment must be overcome and unemployment insurance reinstituted as a social right of the people.
- The pension plan must be invigorated as a social right.
- Fair demands of the social sectors must be resolved.
- The Charter of Rights and the right to unionize must be emphasized.
- Attempts to privatize health care and education must be radically and definitely halted.
- Privatization of other social services must be averted.
- Privatization of the patrimony of the country must be averted or stopped.
- The asset management of the strategic sectors of the economy must be rescued: power, communications, oil, natural gas, and water.
- The country's ownership of energy resources and minerals must be restored.
- An integral and complete program to protect the natural environment and fix the damage inflicted on it must be designed and developed.
- The protection of parks and forests must be enforced.
- The body of laws to protect women, children, and elders must be reinforced.
- A body politic to resolve First Nations' demands must be implemented.

Further, new international policies must be designed and implemented:

- To retreat from all international agreements that hurt their own country's sovereignty and that of other countries.
- To design a policy of respect for sovereignty, independence, and free determination of other countries.
- To support and spur an agreement that resolves the oppressive situation of Palestine: absolute independence, inalienable territory, and sovereign repatriation and integration of its dispersed inhabitants.
- To create solidarity and support for the end of the US embargo against Cuba and to oppose US hostility against Cuba.

- To oppose every unilateral declaration, decision, and act against international law that addresses abuse, especially to Third World countries.
- To adopt a policy with the US based on mutual respect, sovereignty, and independence.
- To promote the democratization of the United Nations and its restructuring to enable it to become efficient and effective in stopping the violations of international law, unilateral wars, genocide, and more.
- To design and promote market agreements not based on inequality and asymmetry (disadvantages for the poor countries).
- To support a policy of cancelling external debt, especially of poor countries.
- To design and implement an international policy to protect the natural environment and to fix the inflicted damage.
- To design and promote policies to democratize market agreements, such as the free trade of medicine.
- To sign and promote policies to attack international scourges such as AIDS, cancer, TB, and so on, as well as drought and famine.
- To adopt a policy against poverty, hunger, drought, and famine.
- To adopt a wide and strong policy of international solidarity.
- To contribute to building a New World Order.

Objective conditions can be formulated as components of political, economic, and social demands. Conversely, there are no significant subjective conditions. This is the challenge: to work to create subjective conditions because they cannot be produced spontaneously. The first step is for a nucleus of 'dreamers' to regain consciousness of its presence in the current reality, here and now, within which they are living. I am not promoting reinitiating political theorization and practice for its own sake, but rather envisioning projects that favour the oppressed and deprived in this society. Thus strategies that lack a revolutionary perspective would not be supported.

After having lived in this adoptive country for a considerable time, just to critique the absence of an alternative is pointless. What would be productive is to question, among those organizations that already exist, is there at least one that

can be 'rebuilt'? If the answer is no, what hampers us in constructing one? Would it be easier? Absolutely not. There is no true revolutionary process that is easy. In addition, what impedes us in expressing our solidarity in causes such as war, antiracism, the environment and so on?

Exploitation and oppression are here; the effects of capitalism are here. What are we waiting for?

Here we have the daily presence of US imperialism through political, diplomatic, and economical means, which is enough to subject this country to the will of the US. If one day this country behaves, thinks, and acts independently and with dignity in managing its internal and external affairs, then the unipolar world will not hesitate to blackmail, threaten, and direct its massive and disgusting military forces and sources to suffocate the "irreverence."

Combat Capitalism and Imperialism Anywhere and at Any Time

> *Crear dos, tres . . . muchos Vietnam, es la consigna* (Che)
> To create two, three, . . . many Vietnams, is the watchword.

In our beloved native country there will probably always be a trench for each of us. Whatever the reason, we are living here, and we are delaying our return. Our place in that trench is empty. What impedes us from participating here in protests of antiwar, antiracism, the destruction of the natural environment, labour conflicts, and so on? The revolutionary is not a nationalistic combatant; on the contrary, he/she is internationalist. It is perhaps possible to understand the reasons why as former activists and militants, we do not return to our natives countries. What is hard to understand is that here all of our political, ideological, organizational, and other abilities are completely non-functional.

I am not promoting participation for the sake of participating. We must consider whom we would reinforce, which strategy we would support. If there is no organization that responds to our revolutionary values and principles, then perhaps we have to build one.

A political party that may be progressive and even revolutionary in its declarations but reduces its activities only to the electoral arena is not the type of organization in which we want to participate. It is true that as revolutionaries we must consider the particular conditions of the place—including the free participation of the Left in elections. However, generally, the Left participates under huge disadvantages: It does not have the resources to compete with equality. Furthermore, the Left joins the electoral dynamic and, in doing so, ties itself to the institutionalism. Then often the party does not try other ways of conducting a political fight.

This political party seems to forget that elections are essentially a recycling of the political system. A political party that simply is floating in the stream, as one more electoral party is not germane to the interests and needs of the popular and oppressed sectors. The fundamental and strategic objective—to eradicate the economic, political, and social structures—is no longer part of the political practice of such a party.

The contradiction between oppressor and oppressed must be resolved. This solution, however, is far from being realized. Where are our dreams of liberation? What are we waiting for?

2 We Must Make Sense of Pedagogy

As parents, as teachers, as sensitive human beings we can do something to help the street child, the prostitute, and the child labourer. As I discussed previously, the problem is rapidly increasing. We have information; we have research; now we need to build our bridges, as Change for Children is doing with its program, Painting Peace. This is the transcendence that I noted when I read that "pedagogy is ultimately a practical affair. Pedagogy must be found not in abstract theoretical discourse or analytical systems, but right in the lived world" (Van Manen, 1991, p. 31). In the lived world there are millions of unprivileged

children who are been deprived of their childhood, of the ability to live their lives as children. It is a very generous cause of pedagogy and pedagogues and teachers and everyone who wants to contribute to saving these children. Thus "pedagogy is not just a word" (p. 31), but it is also action such as the people from Change for Children are undertaking. These are "concrete, real-life situations" (p. 31) where the protagonists are children, the central idea that makes sense of pedagogy. This is how I interpret the relevance of pedagogy in the current circumstances because "pedagogy is not just a word" (p. 31).

We must find teachers to share the dream of a new society where children can laugh and play and have plenty of bread and milk, clothing, and a roof over their heads. Teachers share their optimism in a brilliant tomorrow that will be fertile soil for education, science, technology, and culture to grow for people who now live exploited, marginalized, and oppressed. We must improve the quality of education and teaching. Pedagogical relationships are the foundations of childhood. We must create the conditions to allow them to experience childhood, which is fundamentally important for their healthy growth (physically, emotionally, and spiritually) and to shape their lives.

We should become defenders of children worldwide. We, teachers and parents and others who care for children, should know that when children are loved and they know that they are loved, they experience less trauma. But, as we have seen, many children lack this kind of relationship worldwide, which is extremely unfortunate, and it is a challenge to address this problem. Nevertheless, I hope that many of those unprivileged children might be able not only to survive and to live, but also to become 'normal' adults. There may be, I think, possibilities to improve the life of millions of children deprived of pedagogical relationships everywhere.

Imperialist acts and neoliberal measures have children and women among their victims. There are causes and contexts that need to be faced in order to defend and protect the lives of thousands of children. Then the children will be able to experience pedagogical relationships which imply pedagogical action

within a social liberation process. Otherwise, pedagogical attempts will not transcend idealistic intentions.

3 A Letter to Teachers

Invitation to Share the Application of the Pedagogy of Social Liberation

It is very important to improve education. This means buildings, resources, teachers, curriculum, and programs. This is the huge package to be addressed. It is important to reconstruct and even enhance the school building, but it is not enough! It is vital to have enough appropriate educational resources, but they are not enough! "The beauty of space," stated Freire (1993), "requires another beauty: the beauty of competent teaching, the joy of learning and the imagination to create" (p. 16).

The education for which I am looking is one that stimulates cooperation, decision making, participation, and social and political responsibility. It is an education based on the living knowledge of the learner's and community's problems, an education that is not addressed just to schooling or professionalization, which are irrelevant if the possibilities are not promoted to others to gain presence by themselves.

In the current days of unipolarism, which tries to impose world tyranny through neoliberal globalization and political, diplomatic, and military means, deepening poverty, hunger, unemployment, illiteracy, and more, education and education of teachers can not be within an isolated place. It is time to endorse the pedagogy of humanization and to begin to acknowledge a reality that is not the result of any divine determination. So the reality is not eternal and must be radically changed.

As teachers, educators, we know that theoretical reflection and educational practice constitute a praxis that we are expected to live. The oppressed, who do not live only in the Third World countries, but also in 'West' reality, are awaiting the new kind of teachers who will become facilitators of a

pedagogy of social liberation in which the oppressed becomes conscious of their presence, their role, and their power to overcome the unfair economic and political system "of submission, of silence, of destitution, pointing (instead) to a world of possibilities" (Araujo Freire & Macedo, 1998, p. 19). There is a world of possibilities that is socialism. It has not disappeared with the falling of the Berlin Wall, but it will not come just "because it is announced," according to Paulo Freire (as cited in Araujo Freire & Macedo, 1998, p. 274). "Victorious Capitalism," Freire stated, "is [not] an eternal future that has begun" (p. 274).

> Could it be that the present we are living is a good one? Could it be that this is a more or less just present? Could it be that our society has been at least minimally decent? Could it be that we find it possible to sleep while we know tens of millions starve to death? Could it be that we can accept our educational system as reasonable with its current quantitative and qualitative deficiencies? Should we continue to make deals with the World Bank where we expend more than we actually receive?
>
> Could it be that lack of respect for public property is a Brazilian way of being that we can not escape? Could it be that violence, scepticism, and irresponsibility are unchangeable marks of Brazilian nature? No! To change what we presently are it is necessary to change the structure of power radically. (p. 274)

There is no duality between the activist and the teacher; one cannot dissociate from the other. I cannot be a critic of capitalism in the street and a neutral in the classroom. Capitalism is cruel and insensitive and based on exploitation and oppression; capitalism is based on the ideology that paints itself as eternal and says that the problems that humanity suffers are products of fate.

With the imposition and expansion of neoliberal globalization worldwide, the oppression has deepened, and the oppressed are much more oppressed. Thus the liberation of the oppressed is still a challenge. Teachers have a role to play and the skills to apply the pedagogy of social liberation. They "are in part responsible for this task of transforming our society" (Araujo Freire & Macedo, 1998, p. 37). We cannot argue that it is too late or too early to participate in the highest act of love: to create a better world, more just and more humane

socialism. Freire (as cited in Araujo Freire & Macedo, 1998) believed that "we can do everything possible today to build a democratic society for tomorrow" (p. 37).

We teachers must break the tendency to teach knowledge in isolation as if there were no frames and contexts, causes and effects, dialectical interrelation; for instance, when teaching language, "it is not possible to think of language without thinking of the concrete social world we constitute. It is impossible to think of language without thinking of power and ideology" (Freire, 1993b, p. 41).

We teachers must reject false 'objectivism' that leaves students in ignorance, in limbo, and confused. It is not ethically acceptable to avoid the confrontation of our words and our acts; it requires our "competence, love, political clarity, the coherence" between what we say and do, our "tolerance," our "ability to live with the different, to fight against the antagonistic" (p. 50). In doing so we encourage "doubt, criticism, curiosity, questioning, a taste for risk taking, the adventure of creating" (p. 50).

Consequently, we must insist that "every reading of the word is preceded by a reading of the world, . . . that the learner brings to the literacy program [a social and class-determined reading]" (p. 58). Thus "words, sentences, articulated discourses do not take place up in the air. They are historical and social" (p. 58). In summary, "the literacy process with adults necessarily implies the critical development of the reading of the world, which is political awareness-generating task" (pp. 58-59). Nevertheless, if we are not thinking just of liberation in the literacy process with adults but also of a pedagogy of social liberation, we must understand that "literacy" as well as "learning" imply "not just the reading of the word, but also the reading of the world" (p. 59). There is no valid justification for hiding, denying or neglecting critical thinking in order for students of any age to read the world. The challenge is how to do so accordingly to their stage of development.

We must stop singing of a pedagogy of illusions that simply does not exist and will not exist while it ignores the reality of the context within wich education

occurs, because "we cannot speak of educational goals without making reference to the material conditions of schools" (p. 29).

The notion of pedagogy of social liberation no longer involves just talk on public education as a slogan. Public education implies a high level of respect for its children, teachers, schools, parents, and community (p. 29). Only then can we

> expect and demand that everyone respects also the school desks, the school walls, as well as the school doors. Only then we can speak of principles and values. The ethical is intimately tied to the aesthetic. We cannot speak to students about the beauty of the knowing process if their classrooms are flooded with water, if the wind enters... (pp. 29-30)

We can no longer embrace 'pink pedagogies' which are beautiful in their authors' minds and books, but are empty and divorced from life and far from the live experiences of students, teachers, parents, and community' lives.

We teachers must go further to understand the phenomena of education—the dropout, for instance. The reality of Third World countries has been to emphasize that students do not leave school just because they want to. Instead, they are expelled by the structure of society, which sets barriers and difficulties that become great obstacles "for the children of subordinate classes to come to school. But also, when these children come to school, they experience the same barriers and difficulties in staying in school in order to acquire the education to which they have a right" (p. 31). We teachers must ask if in the developed countries the 'ropout'has different motivations.

We teachers must respect our students in a very integral and profound way:

> their class and cultural patterns, their values, their knowledge, and their language—a school system that does not assess the intellectual potential of lower-class children with evaluation tools created for those whose class conditioning gives them an undeniable advantage over the former. (p. 37)

We teachers must contribute to building an education committed to the critical "emancipation of the oppressed classes" (p. 65). As is Freire's conception of the pedagogy of the oppressed, this notion of pedagogy of social liberation is also historical, lived by historical beings who "transform themselves" (p. 66) while transforming reality, and applied according to variables of time and space (p.65).

We teachers must be profoundly and consistently democratic in our teaching practice and in all acts of our lives without exception, using teacher's 'authority' but discarding authoritarianism, based on "not all humans are equal in our physical characteristics, but all humans are equal in talents, sentiments and other virtues, which are useful for demonstrating that in moral, social, intellectual and human abilities we all are genetically equal" (Castro, 1999, p. 9).

4 Why must teachers reproduce and/or reinforce patterns of class and ethnic dominance?

In the context of the struggles of society, it may be desirable that education neither fail by omission nor serve as an accomplice in the domestication of citizens. There is a challenge for teachers. In the last decade the profession has been targeted by government actions in the form of attacks on education. Now teachers are facing the traditional ethical dilemma: to be the instruments of government policies or agents of change.

Education means that curriculum, the teaching-learning process, and teachers are pivotal in the plans of corporations and their governments to implant, expand, and consolidate globalization in any country. Correspondingly, education authorities, administrators, and teachers have been assigned functions, responsibilities, and duties. Essentially, these are undesirable jobs, first, against the Self of students, who are programmed to be addicted consumers; robot-like, non-critical thinkers; blue- or white- collar workers in lifelong learning, and so on. In the middle and long term the assigned mission of

education is fundamentally against the less favoured in each country, and, to accomplish this mission, teachers must do a 'dirty job.'

Governments clear the deficits, and the poor pay the bills. After a while there is an increasing number of people with a wide diversity of physical, emotional, and psychological disabilities. As well, in the community there are more street children, juvenile gangs, drugs, and other phenomena. The huge profits produced by the deficit-clearing goals of provincial and federal governments contributes to a physically, emotionally, and spiritually sick society.

This scary reality is becoming more and more evident for teachers. They need to fight for better conditions of life (salary and benefits)—and, in fact, sometimes they do. Moreover, teachers need to stand up to the brutal attacks against education and themselves. Furthermore, government policies trigger teachers' ethical dilemma: their role as institutional agents or as agents of change (which means taking sides with the poor and contributing to students' critical thinking). Regaining rights will guarantee that new generations of children will have a better sense of security and predictability than they do now. Those will be times of healthy growth and development for children.

In the so-called 'open and free societies,' schools are between two tensions: "On the one hand they are charged with the responsibility of teaching the virtues of democracy, and, on the other hand, they are complicit with the inherent hypocrisy of contemporary democracies" (Macedo; as cited in Chomsky, 2000, p. 1). We should not take for granted that schools are really "democratic sites where democratic values are learned" (Macedo; p. 2). Furthermore, we should be sure that teachers have not become "cultural middle managers" who support 'theological thrusts' (or unquestioned thrust) (p. 2). Finally, we should be conscious that we are not legitimating "the institutional role schools play in a system" (p. 2).

Why there is a number of teachers who reproduce and/or reinforce patterns of class and ethnic dominance? For instance, some students "were made to feel inadequate due to their class . . . status and hence the school

offered to help socialize them into the 'appropriate' values and behaviours by tracking them into designated streams and basic level courses" (McLaren, 1999, p. 1).

There are schools that are institutions for indoctrination and for enforcing obedience. These schools are not creating independent thinkers; instead, they "educate" (which means socializing and domesticating) to "support the power structure" (Macedo; as cited in Chomsky, 2000, p. 3). Teachers who work there "are expected to engage in a form of moral, social, political and economic reproduction designed to shape students in the image of the dominant society" (p. 3). It is, in others words, a sort of "sophisticated colonial model of education" (p. 3).

Thus, in the context of the current times I have difficulty understanding why there are teachers who hide, deny, or ignore the unipolar world system in which humanity is suffering. They omit the world, regional, national and local contexts. The narrowness of social studies lessons that still teach the concept of the Cold War is lamentable. Even more, those teachers fail to teach that in the current times it is more obvious than ever that the United States is the enemy of humanity and, as the main international terrorist power, does not hesitate to use "its vast military might to achieve whatever ends it deems to be in its own strategic interest" (McLaren, 2002, p. 5). Or to cite Chomsky's (2004) concern, the US is the greatest threat to the world and is a state that "has practiced terrorism and protects terrorists in its country" (p. 1). Why are there those who do not help students to understand the reality within which they are living? Instead, some social studies teachers have become parrots of "the war against terrorism" and other nonsense.

Accordingly, instead of teaching students to read the world critically and to understand the dialectic interrelation of things, we have a "banking skills approach" based on "meaningless drills" and other practices. Students "are expected to learn by a mere transfer of knowledge, consumed through rote memorization and later regurgitated" (Macedo; as cited in Chomsky, 2000, p. 4).

What can silent teachers' voices do to denounce the US's use of depleted uranium, which provokes ecological catastrophies and mutates future generations? What makes some other teachers silent about the genocide in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and now Iraq? What makes other teachers silent about the increasing threats against Cuba, whose only "fault" is to be independent, sovereign, and socialist? Why are they silent about the US's current, -January 2005- rising threats to attack Syria and Iran?

Why are a number of teachers not able to articulate that neoliberal globalization is imposed worldwide using political, diplomatic, economical, and military means? Students are like "empty vessels" to be "filled with predetermined bodies of knowledge" that are frequently not related to their backgrounds (their social realities) and divorced from "equity, responsibility and democracy" (Macedo; as cited in Chomsky, 2000, p. 5). In summary, this education for domestication "does not give pedagogical spaces for students"; instead, it fits the models and circulates around the "interest of the sacred order" (p. 5). All this framework of ommission, denial, lies and propagation of myths is addressed to maintain "present cultural and economic hegemony" (Macedo; as cited in Chomsky, 2000, p. 6). This status quo is at risk only when the teaching of truth begins and expands. The teaching of truth not only shocks, but also unveils the consciousness of students, which awakens it. Understanding and making connections between historic events and separating things and facts that seem to be the same or equivalent is crucial. Another factor is that "the pedagogy of lies promoted by the dominant ideology to prevent the development of a 'critical comprehension of reality' is the creation of necessary illusions and emotionally potent oversimplifications" (p. 10). This pedagogy of lies to domesticate citizens is typical in the United States, but, with some variances, we find the same pedagogy in other countries, developed and underdeveloped.

There is not much evidence of education's contribution to the struggle against neoliberal globalization, but this absence does not deny the possibility of

education playing an important role in the process towards social liberation. This means a human world. Therefore there is still hope, as Paulo Freire (as cited in Chomsky, 2000), said:

> To think of history as possibility is to recognize education as possibility. It is to recognize that if education cannot do everything, it can achieve some things... One of our challenges as educators is to discover what historically is possible in the sense of contribution toward the transformation of the world, giving rise to a world that is rounder, less angular, more humane. (p. 3)

5 A Number of Teachers Make Education a Practice of Social Liberation

In USA, Canada, England, Australia, France and other developed countries, as well as in the Third World, there are increasing numbers of teachers and educators who make education a practice of social liberation. They are already working towards critical consciousness, helping their students not only to transform themselves, but also to discover the paths that conduce the transformation of the world. These teachers and educators have made education's possibilities play an emancipator role. I used to be a leader in the union of teachers in El Salvador. I am sure that if I had had a solid knowledge of this theory my contributions would be better than they were. In doing this dissertation, I owe knowledge on theory and practice to those teachers and educators who make education a practice of liberation. I give them my recognition, support and solidarity. It is not easy to be a progressive dissident in the field of education in these times!

I join those teachers and educators who believe in a concept of education that really enriches critical thinking, strengthens solidarity with others who are deprived of freedom and material needs such us food, housing, clothing, health, and medicine; and who are deprived of their cultural rights, such as literacy and entertainment. I am with those teachers and educators who believe in an

education that gives us words that reinforce courage and other intellectual 'weapons' to become ideologically strong and to fight for a better world, a concept of education that annihilates pessimism and vindicates optimism on the triumph of the exploited and the oppressed over the dominant classes and groups.

I am in solidarity with those teachers and educators who believe in a concept of education for social liberation that identifies that neoliberal globalization does generate progress. But progress for whom? Progress for those who are the owners of the productive means and the capital? Conversely, if mainly those who have been socially deprived conceive progress as cultural and material wealth to be shared by the citizens, then global solidarity and collaboration would be welcomed. Otherwise, globalization must be opposed and fought.

I am with those teachers and educators who believe in a concept of education for social liberation that does not deny the truth to students: that neoliberal globalization is the imperial capitalism that has been imposed worldwide by US aggression and their allies in each country and region, and by their international financial institutions. This imperialism is imposed by any means: economically, diplomatically, politically, and militarily e.g. through "pre-emptive wars" to those irreverent countries that do not give up their sovereignty; for instance, the imperialist genocides in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq; and the other approximately 60 countries targeted by the current US administration.

With no hesitation, I support those teachers and educators who believe in a concept of education for social liberation that does not hide the fact that imperialism is the enemy of humanity and must be resisted and defeated to save humanity (and to do so, it becomes necessary to use and combine the most diverse methods and forms of fighting—politically, economically, diplomatically, and so on). The struggle has to be based in wide alliances and at local, national, and international levels, and the motives for remediation lie in the multiple global

problems we face, such as hunger, epidemics, destruction of the environment, imperialist wars, and annexionist projects.

A key requirement must be a concept of education for social liberation that analyzes the contradictions of financial speculation versus the real economy in the current stage of capitalism, to help the study of the economy and politics in the current times. It must contribute to creating theoretical conditions capable of moving the struggle towards a fair and human, new society.

6 A Call to Progressive Intellectuals: We Must Speak Out!

Why does the academic not like to talk and hear of these topics in a language that articulates the pain, feelings, and tone of those who suffer oppression and exploitation and those who want to fight injustice and inequality? What is the point of the ivory tower where academics are deliberating for themselves in a language understandable only by themselves on topics that are relevant only to themselves?

We should embrace and validate the fundamental principle of self-determination of the nations; therefore we should avoid the trap of justifying the genocide of imperialists—"Milosevic's cleansing" (which has never been proven) or the fundamentalist rules of the Taliban or the authoritarianism of Saddam Hussein—all of which are vulgar excuses for imperialist aggressors. The oppressed and exploited worldwide do not need imperial "liberators."

We need to stop the silence and complicity that surrender moral and political principles and castrate the ability to "analyze the sequence of destructive imperial wars" (Petras, 2001c, p. 4). We must reject the naïve idea that "each war is a response to tyrants, traffickers and terrorists" (p. 4). We must also reject "the equation of the global aggression of an imperial tyrant with the resistance of a local dictator" (p.4). Furthermore, we need to banish "cowardice as much as moral vacuity" (p.4) that conduces to "silence, moral ambiguity and abandonment of the most elementary anti-colonial principles" (p.4) for instance,

in the Palestinian struggle. We must halt our abdication of moral responsibility and political principles. We must validate the right to speak out against the genocide of Zionists without being afraid to be called "anti-Semite" (p. 4).

We need to overcome the perception that the attacks on September 11, 2001, were an "unprecedented event in the modern times" (Petras, 2001c, p. 5) because they were not. In Kosovo during NATO's occupation, 2,500 to 3,000 Serbs were killed by the terrorist KLA. The 10 years of US and British bombing and blockade of Iraq caused about 1,000 deaths a week. Many acts of genocide have been committed by US imperialism with higher numbers of victims. In terms of the death toll, September 11 was not an unprecedented human tragedy or more tragic than the genocides executed by imperialism everywhere and at any time.

We need to reject the mantra that the genocides in Afghanistan (twice), Yugoslavia (twice), and Iraq (twice, plus bombing and blockade for 10 years) were "just wars" or that the "war should avoid civilian casualties." "War" is massive bombing of everything, "including hospitals, homes, refugee camps, etc."(Petras, 2001c, p. 5).

We must reject the "double demon argument: equating the September 11 attack with the sustained terror bombing of an impoverished country" (Petras, 2001c, p. 6) where 27 million people have been subjected to bombing, killing, and torturing; and there are 3.5 million refugees. It is not just a double demon, but also a double standard: "The criteria are not *quantity*, it is *quality*: one US victim equals 100,000 Afghan refugees; 20 stock brokerage firms equal 20,000" (p. 6).

> We must expose the fact that the fundamental perversion of moral equivalency is found in the two sides of the equation: US state terror is clear to everyone; the other side is a big question mark, but with an asterisk: no one suspects the Afghan regime of responsibility for the attacks. . . .
>
> The theoretical and moral issue is that there is no equivalent guilt for war and terror on "both sides." One side, Washington, is guilty of mass terrorism in pursuit of a military victory; the other side, the Afghan

> regime, has never been proven to have been involved in a terrorist incident in the US and has been willing to consider a judicial resolution of suspects in its territory. The Bush administration's use of state terror is immoral. (Petras, 2001c, p. 6)

We should never fall into the trap of focusing on secondary issues, magnifying the defects of the targeted regime that is to be destroyed by the imperial power. Oppression, illiteracy, infant mortality rates, authoritarianism, and restrictive religious practices in a Third World country do not legitimize or justify imperial aggression. The propaganda machine discredits the target until fewer and fewer voices oppose the imminent aggression, and that it is justified because "the real message is that the regime deserves to be destroyed" (Petras, 2001c, p. 6). This worked well with Presidents Noriega, Saddam Hussein, Milosevic, and in the Taliban cases. We must stress the fundamental issues: that the self-determination, sovereignty, and freedom of a targeted country are under threat and that after the aggression a client- regime will be imposed. Considering the tendencies of the past and present imperial invaders and the statements of Bush and his "gang," there are probably many more aggressions in the future plans of imperialists.

We must unmask new calls to make war against the Arabs, the insurgents in Colombia, Cuba, Iran, Syria, North Korea, Sudan, etc. We must not succumb and hide ourselves in our books, libraries, offices, and coffee shops. The "enemy of humanity," the biggest terrorist state, the US, through its aggression, is committing horrendous crimes against humanity. We must pursue the almost utopian initiative to create "a War Crimes Tribunal for the perpetrators of the Total War," as the British journalist Robert Fisk (as cited in Petras, 2001c, p. 8) proposed.

It is imperative that Leftist intellectuals revive not only their critical intelligence, but also their moral courage to resist the argument of "double demons" and "moral equivalences" (Petras, 2001c, p. 8). They will need to "say

what needs to be said about colonial states" and "recognize that they live in an empire and have a special responsibility to recognize that empires do not pursue humanitarian wars, only wars against humanity" (p. 8).

We must recognize and learn from the heroic example of the people and the leaders of Yugoslavia (Serbia), Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine—who did not and do not give up their right to fight for their self-determination, sovereignty, and freedom. They did not kneel before the massive imperial power. And we must also share with our students and others what we have learned. For more example we can cite of the people of the Soviet Union, who defeated Nazism at the high cost of 20 million lives. We can remember the heroic resistance of Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) and Stalingrad; or perhaps the historical example of the Vietnamese people, who successively defeated two imperialists: the French in 1954 and the USA in 1975; or perhaps Cuba, which has resisted aggression since 1959.

7 Closing this Manifesto: A Call to Fight to Win

To the working class, peasants without land, homeless, poor, exploited, oppressed and repressed

Capitalism is "a moribund social system in an advanced and irreversible state of decomposition" (Balaguer Cabrera, 2003, p. 1). The strategic objective of the popular struggle is to build a socialist society. It is, I firmly believe, the only option for the oppressed or the only "alternative to the barbarism," (Rosa Luxemburg, as cited by Balaguer Cabrera, 2003, p. 1).

Sovereignty is a prerogative of nations and independent peoples. The world is ruled by this principle, which has universal validity. Imperialists permanently reject sovereignty; we must oppose this violation by any means and never give up this right.

We must reject the contemporary messengers of amnesia, pessimism, fatalism, and impotence (called *disillusion*, *disengagement*, and other labels). Why do things have to be different now from before? Why would it be better to survive, kneeling, deprived of freedom and dignity, than to fight for these values?

We must fight locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally. We must ensure solidarity between popular actions and government initiatives and positions to resist the pressure of imperialists, financial institutions, and corporations.

We must present the interrelationship between anti-imperialist and anticapitalist tasks. The first task is to conduct the strategic fight in the present and the second is to look at the horizon for social liberation. How to keep this perspective is the challenge for revolutionaries. Properly conducted, anti-imperialist struggles will create benefits for the other stages of the revolutionary process.

We should consider that this is a general fight in which everybody can participate. There is no room for sectarianism and exclusion. However, even though the struggle must be as broad as possible, it must have direction and destiny. History is fuelled by failures because of the lack of revolutionary direction.

We must apply the most creative and varied forms and methods of fighting. Hence a very wide politic of alliances is required.

We must ensure that the application of the strategy of fighting and resistance must respond to the particular conditions of each country and place.

The alternative to neoliberalism is socialism, not another version of capitalism. The objective conditions are there: hunger, unemployment, poverty, and so on. The moral obligation of every revolutionary is to create revolution. With the dilemma to fight or to succumb, individuals have the right and moral obligation to participate from their houses and their jobs. The door is open.

Education is able to and must play a role in the transformation of this unequal and unfair society. Social studies teaching should help students to understand the world—at immediate or local, national, and international levels—which can be potentially "changed, transformed and reinvented" (Harold Raynolds, Jr.; as cited in Freire, 1993, p. 10).

There is the clamour of almost 100 million Latin Americans who have become poor; of these, 59 million are poorer than they were 20 years ago (Calloni, 2004, p. 1). There is the voice of 26 million Latin American middle-class people who have become poor (p. 1). There is shame in the fact that 190,000 Latin American children die annually from illness related to poverty. And similarly shameful is that about 40 million children live or work in the streets of Latin America (p. 1).

It is time to act politically, responsibly, and consciously. It is time to unmask the United States as the enemy of humanity and the biggest international terrorist, which executes any number of war crimes. This is the country that exercises a traditional world dictatorship and whose current leaders impose a fascist tyranny. In any place, at any time that this country intervenes, we see illegal capture and kidnapping, torture, massacre, genocide, and murder committed on behalf of US imperialism.

How does one fight imperialism? By occupying lands, displacing *latifundistas,* facing paramilitaries. This is the reality of the los Sin Tierra (MST), of the Cocaleros, of the supporters of Chavez (Petras, 2004, p. 4).

It is time to to fight with whatever means we have to defeat the US's attempts to overthrow governments that do not submit to imperial orders. The unity of fighters and wide alliances are fundamental to strengthening the resistance and to freeing us from the imperial claws. There will be local, national, regional, and international journeys, campaigns, and actions. Coordination and solidarity are critical.

It is important and urgent, for both the people of the United States and those who fight worldwide imperialism, to continually study imperialism including

its religious frames, in order to formulate an updated theorization for understanding it with the purpose of fighting it. Hence the US's imperialistic supremacy must be overthrown by the action of people.

APPENDIX 2: SOCIALISM FROM THE HEART OF COMMUNITIES

An example of Critical Pedagogy Practice

A new practice of Socialism and the space for teachers to be among its best pioneers *

Ideas for distribution to the participants in an imagined General Assembly for social and political reform

Compañeros asambleístas:

The only reason to become representative of an electoral circumscription is to serve the people or to reinforce the political and economical system.

The moral integrity of the new men and women begins now.
In the current times we people make our leaders work with us.
The first step is to live with the people and to know the particular conditions of people and place.

The objective conditions impelling changes are here. We are working to generate subjective conditions. Love and optimism are basic to start the building of our dreams. We need just two dreamers. In our particular case, these two pioneers were teachers, and then the possibilities to grow were the best! How they did? They armed themselves with love and confidence for others and optimism in their abilities to work for this dream of emancipation. They did not come to teach, but to learn along with us. They did not come to order; they suggest and they where the first to do what they suggested. Their attitudes and their conduct at the school, in the streets, within the community, in the city were consistently based on moral integrity. They never used their ascendancy to enjoy privileges at the school and within this community.
They started this great job from the simple to the complex things and look what we haver now
We can make possible the impossible!

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*This is a visualization of a new way to work for a better world; however, it is not a prescription for countries of the Third World. Unless democracy in Canada has reached perfection, it would mean that there were not inequalities, why can't a new practice of Socialism where teachers could be among its best pioneers be implemented?

First Part: The program

A mature woman who presides the assembly says:

Compañeros: People must design, vote and change the program. We are going to make our program. We have the components of an integral program because our conception of emancipation is holistic and starts here and now. The leaders and their representatives respond to the assembly and to the program.

Material demands and needs

Environmental demands

Childrens demands

Womens demands

Seniors demands

Political demands and needs

Spiritual and Cultural demands and needs

Other demands and needs

Second Part: Election of representatives

A banner reads "The free participation of people to elect its delegates is a golden rule. This means to respect people and genuine democracy"

The woman who presides the assembly says

> Under the condition impelling the above program and given the essential conditions: a profound love for people and a firm confidence in the potentialities of people, this assembly will elect its representatives to the municipal election.
> There are probably some people who aspire to be elected. They feel confident in their training and skills. As we will see through the election process, there are more qualities, values and principles to be considered. Compañeros, give names to make a list of precandidates. And remember, to do things right, the list must have both men and women.

From different places names are mentioned and a young man write them on a black board. "Compañeros, we have twenty precandidates. Lets make the first evaluation," says the woman who leads the assembly.

From different places voices say

> Pedro speaks pretty, but he loves to talk and order others, but he does not do what he commands.
> Roberto is a good to speaker and does what he suggests, but his machismo does not seem to disappear.
> María is almost good in everyway, but she loves money and I do not know..."
> ...

And then, the list has been reduced to ten.

> Compañeros, now we are going to elect five from ten, but first, lets read some basic conditions which if you are elected will become commitments. Please, if you realize that, for any reason you are not in good position to accept even just only one of the next commitments, please, respect this assembly and resign from the said list before election. Could you, please, Manuel, read the conditions?

And Manuel reads:

The conditions
To be read in clear and high voice before the Assembly to be heard by the precandidates.

1. If you are elected you will become a representative of this assembly. As such you will comeback each 15 days to give account of your actions. If you do not do so, or you fail or are dishonest, the substitute will take your place.
2. If you are elected you will become an example within this place, in your job, on the streets and everywhere! You could not be a model here and a disaster there and a monster over there. If you fail in this the substitute will take your place.
3. If you are elected your style of life will not be changed. It means, that this assembly is not electing anyone to improve his or her life. The reason is because you would be elected to serve others, and no serve yourself. In other words the only privilege you will have is to work much more. If you do not do this, the substitute will take your place.
4. To be concrete, you would receive from this community what you would need to live, no more, no less. This assembly will receive and administrate your salaries, bonus and other incomes.
   In other words the people of this assembly is not interested in changing somebody's social status by becoming a public officer.
   If you do not do this, the substitute would take your place.
5. Zero tolerance of corruption, abuse of power, harassment in any form, bureaucracy and negligence. If you fail in this, the substitute will take your place.

"*Gracias Manuel.* Compañeros precandidates: This moment is crucial. Are you able to submit to the will of the popular democracy of this people or are not you ready? Could you, please respond, "*Yes, I will do it*" or "*No, I am not ready to do it*" Thank you. At the end, on the black board there are only three names. And two teachers converse:

-Yes, they are three genuine representatives of their own people.
-The democracy of citizens is no longer a petrified phrase from the Social Studies curriculum. Democracy is becoming part of the lives of people.
-It is true; and it becomes a great stimulus to intensify the job. There will be a day when more teachers at schools will creatively apply critical pedagogy. This will leave the academic towers and will be free, renovated and alive not only within schools, but in the hearts of communities!